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ON RELIGIOUS RESTORATION IN ENGLAND:

A

SERIES OF SERMONS

PREACHED IN

WESTMINSTER ABBEY,

AT

*The Boyle Lecture.*

BY

CHR. WORDSWORTH, D.D.

CANON OF WESTMINSTER.

LONDON:

RIVINGTONS, WATERLOO PLACE.

1854.

LONDON :  
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## ADVERTISEMENT.

THE present Volume had its origin in the Author's appointment, by the kindness of the distinguished Persons whose names are inscribed in the following page, to the office of preaching the Lecture founded in the year 1691 by the HON. ROBERT BOYLE. It is well known to have been the design of that pious and noble-minded Christian Philosopher, in establishing this Lecture, that it should be serviceable in refuting the attacks of Deism and Infidelity; and it is the Author's hope that in endeavouring to strengthen the foundations of Religion in England, and to restore them where they are decayed, he has not diverted from the Founder's intentions, who shewed in an eminent degree, by his own example, his persuasion that the best Refutation of Unbelief is to be found in the life of a Christian.

The present Discourses are numbered so as to form a continuation of the Author's "Occasional Sermons," and to range with them.

*Cloisters, Westminster Abbey,*

August 25, 1854.



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TO HIS GRACE  
WILLIAM SPENCER CAVENDISH,  
DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE, K.G.,

TO THE RIGHT HON.  
WILLIAM CAVENDISH,  
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AND  
TO THE RIGHT HON. AND RIGHT REV.  
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### ADDITIONAL NOTE

to p. 39, 40, "On the Religious Census," and to p. 174, "On Church Rates."

SINCE these Sermons were preached and printed, the Fifteenth Report of the Registrar-General has been published, which shews that in the total number of Marriages in England and Wales in 1852, nearly *six-sevenths* were solemnized according to the Ritual of the Church, and *less than one-fifteenth* was celebrated in other Protestant Congregations. Hence it would appear, that almost the whole population regards itself as connected practically, in some important respects, by religious relationship with the Church: and, hence also a hopeful assurance may be derived of the Restoration of Religious Unity, if the requisite means are adopted for that purpose.

The actual numbers are as follows:—

Total Marriages in 1852	. . . . . 158,782
At Church	. . . . . 133,882
In other Protestant Congregations, including	
Quakers	. . . . . 10,074
Roman Catholics	. . . . . 7,479
Jews	. . . . . 247

### ERRATUM.

Page 217, line 17, *for its efficiency read their efficiency.*

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# OCCASIONAL SERMONS,

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## SERMON XXXIV.

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RELIGIOUS RESTORATION IN ENGLAND.—INTRODUCTION.

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ISA. lviii. 12.

*“Thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.”*

THE life of a Nation, not animated by true Religion, appears to resemble that of the human frame. It has its seasons of infancy, youth, manhood, decline, and dissolution, succeeding one another in regular order; and it is as difficult for such a nation to recover its vigour, as it is for a human body to return from a state of decrepitude to the strength and beauty of youth.

But genuine Religion, infused into the heart of a State, appears to possess the power of national renovation. It seems to elevate a Nation from a corporeal to a spiritual life; it effects the work on a State which Repentance does in the Soul. It can raise it from old age and decay, and make it flourish again in the light and bloom of a second spring.

Accordingly we find, that among heathen or infidel Commonwealths, scarce one can be named which ever emerged from the depth of degradation into which it had once sunk. But among Nations professing true Religion, and clinging to it as their main stay in the storm and shipwreck of National Calamities, many

examples may be cited of National recovery, even by means of those calamities, which, except for the buoyancy that those nations possessed in their public Religious Principle, must have engulfed them in the abyss.

This is a consideration which may well suggest motives to exertion in times of National degeneracy; and sheds forth gleams of hope in times of public affliction.

I. That a Nation, as a Nation, may be guilty of sin in the eye of Almighty God, will hardly be questioned by any who receive the Scriptures as His Word. *When a land<sup>1</sup> sinneth against Me by trespassing grievously,* is His language by the Prophet<sup>2</sup>. Nor can it be doubted, that when a Nation sins in its National Character, it must expect National Judgments.

It is indeed true, that a sinful Nation is sometimes allowed by Almighty God to enjoy for a time great worldly prosperity, and to exercise worldly power. Guilty Rulers and Nations are often used by God as His own instruments for humbling and chastising other Nations which have been blessed by Him with greater spiritual privileges, and have failed to use them aright<sup>3</sup>. For Judgment *begins* at the house of God<sup>4</sup>. Thus the Kings of Assyria and Babylon were employed by Him *as the rod of His anger and the staff of His indignation* against His own ungrateful people<sup>5</sup>. Thus the Roman Legions were enlisted and sent by

<sup>1</sup> "A land." So (without the article) in the original.

<sup>2</sup> Ezek. xiv. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Reference may be made here to the valuable observations in Salvian's treatise, "De Gubernatione Dei" (written in the middle of the fifth century), particularly the fourth and following books, a work deserving special attention in seasons of National Judgments.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Pet. iv. 17.

<sup>5</sup> Isa. x. 5.

Him to besiege the city of Jerusalem, and to scatter the People which had rejected Christ.

And in Christian times, the armies of the Goth<sup>6</sup>, the Vandal, and the Hun, and of the Arabian Impostor, have served as ministers of God to punish the Nations of Christendom for Idolatry, Superstition, Licentiousness, Heresy, and Schism.

II. This is indeed true. But guilty Nations who have been used for the punishment of others are in their turn the victims of that retribution which they are sent to execute. They perhaps have imagined that they have achieved conquests by their own power, whereas it was God Who brought it to *pass that they should be to lay waste fenced cities into desolate heaps*<sup>7</sup>. And yet, unconscious of their office, and infatuated by pride, they say, *By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom, for I am prudent; and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures; My hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs that are left, have I gathered all the earth*<sup>8</sup>. But what is God's reply? *Shall the ax boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? or the staff lift up itself, as if it were no wood*<sup>9</sup>? *Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed His whole work upon Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria and the glory of his high looks*<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> See the affecting and beautiful lamentation in St. Jerome's Epitaph. Nepotian. iv. p. 274, ed. Bened.: "Nostris peccatis barbari fortes sunt," &c. "Infelices nos, qui tantum displicemus Deo ut per rabiem barbarorum Illius ira in nos desæviat;" and Salvian's treatise quoted above, especially iii. 9.

<sup>7</sup> 2 Kings xix. 25.

<sup>8</sup> Isa. x. 5. 13, 14.

<sup>9</sup> Isa. x. 15.

<sup>1</sup> Isa. x. 12. See also Isa. xxxvii. 22—29.

This then is the universal law. National Sins bring with them sooner or later National Punishments. Indeed, however some may allege that a moral system of National Rewards and Punishments was peculiar to the Jewish Theocracy, we need not hesitate to affirm, that whereas the sins of *individuals* are often unpunished in *this* world, the sins of *Nations* never escape with impunity.

The reason is obvious. The world is under a moral Governor. And it is no impeachment of God's moral government, that a wicked man should prosper in this world; for there is a life to come, and *we must all stand at the Judgment-seat of Christ*<sup>2</sup>. *The dead will be raised, the Throne will be set and the books opened, and every man will be judged according to his works*<sup>3</sup>, and then each man's *personal* share in the collective acts of his country will be disentangled from the complex web of general Responsibility, and will be a subject of divine cognizance. But there is no Resurrection for Nations. No Trumpet will awaken them. England will not stand, as England, before the Judgment-seat of Christ. The names of France, of Russia, of Turkey, and of Greece, will not be heard in that universal, everlasting Kingdom, the Kingdom of God.

III. What then is the inference? If God governs the World, and if He is Just and Omnipotent, and if Nations can sin, as He assures us they can, they must look to be punished in *this* world. And we need not scruple to add, that as the present world draws nearer to its close, and as, consequently, the time becomes shorter which is available for the execution of God's Judgments on sinful Nations upon earth, we may expect to see National Punishments following more closely on National Sins.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. xiv. 10. 2 Cor. v. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xx. 11—15.

The final period of the world's existence will be eminently a Theocratic One. Divine Prophecy declares that it will be characterized by great National Sins, and by severe National Judgments. Its transactions are announced by the heavenly acclamation, "Great and marvellous are Thy works, O Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou *King of Nations*<sup>4</sup>. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy Name? for Thou only art holy: for all the *Nations* shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy *Judgments have been made manifest*<sup>5</sup>."

That period will attain its climax, and receive its consummation, when all rebellious powers will be made to adore Christ, as David prophesies in the second Psalm, and will be bowed down under His Feet, as the Kings of Canaan were brought forth from the cave in which they had taken refuge, and were bowed beneath the feet of Joshua, the victorious type of Christ<sup>6</sup>. And then the triumph of Christ will be complete, and be sung by the voice of Angels, *The kingdom of this world is become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever. We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, Which art and wast and art to come, because Thou hast taken to Thee Thy great power and art King; and the Nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged*<sup>7</sup>.

From these premises it follows, that though we cannot infer from the prosperity of a Nation at any given time, that it is pleasing in the sight of God, we may conclude, that, if it suffers punishment, it has been guilty of sinning against Him. And we may hence deduce the necessity of National Repentance as a prerequisite for National Restoration.

<sup>4</sup> So in the best MSS. of the original.

<sup>5</sup> Rev. xv. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Josh. x. 22—25.

<sup>7</sup> Rev. xi. 15—18.

IV. But here it may justly be enquired,  
*What punishments may be termed National?*

Almighty God appears to have replied to this question, “*When a Land sinneth against Me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out mine hand upon it.*” And the purposes for which He will stretch forth His Hand to execute judgment He describes as specially *four*. And of these four the first is, *War*. “*When I send My four sore judgments, the Sword, and the Famine, and the noisome beast, and the Pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast* <sup>8</sup>.”

Thus then He announces to the World that there are certain criteria, by which a Nation may learn whether it has sinned against God. These marks of cognizance are inscribed by God’s finger on air and earth and sky, so that he that runs may read them; they are like the letters which were graven on the wall of the Chaldean Palace, and alarmed the guilty King in the midst of his profane revelry; and every Daniel—that is, every wise and faithful servant of God,—will endeavour to read them aright.

V. And further, when God speaks of these sore judgments inflicted on a Nation, He adds those remarkable words, “*Though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters, they shall deliver only their own souls, but the land shall be desolate* <sup>9</sup>.”

Could He have shewn more clearly that such Judgments as these are sent for *National Sins*? The personal holiness of individuals, especially of such men as Noah, Daniel, and Job, might have a diffusive efficacy in delivering other individuals for *personal sins*,

<sup>8</sup> Ezek. xiv. 21.

<sup>9</sup> Ezek. xiv. 14—20. See also Jer. xv. 1: *Though Moses and Samuel were before Me, yet My mind could not be toward this People.*

but in the case of National Sins as evinced by National Judgments, this diffusive efficacy seems to be checked and dried up. Doubtless, there were many holy men in Jerusalem when the City and Nation endured those woes before its final captivity, such as no other City or Nation had endured. But those holy men delivered only their own souls. The Christians in Jerusalem escaped to Pella, but Jerusalem herself, having sinned as a Nation against Christ,—having rejected and crucified Him with the consentient voice and official act of the Nation, and *not* having *repented* of that sin,—received on her guilty head the outpouring of the vials of God's wrath, War, Pestilence, and Famine, in one tempestuous shower.

Thus, then, we see that National Judgments are sent for National Sins; and are not to be averted by private intercession or personal holiness alone, but require National Repentance.

VI. The consideration of this subject is one of solemn importance to all, especially to those who live in the latter days. And may not our own be the latter days, perhaps the last days? And it derives additional solemnity from the circumstances in which we find ourselves placed as a Nation, at this critical juncture.

We have tasted the cup of National Sorrow. We have known something of Famine—particularly in Ireland—we have experienced something of Pestilence; and now we are constrained to taste the deadliest draught of all—that of War<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> A war, too, of peculiar character. One in which we are entangled we scarcely know how, and in which, it is to be feared,—however such tendencies may now be disguised,—Eastern and Western Christendom will eventually be arrayed against each other

This cup, which *is in God's Right Hand*<sup>2</sup>, and is now presented to our lips, will be to us according to the use we make of it, and to the ingredients we mingle with it. It may be to us like the waters of Massah and Meribah, a cup of strife; it may be to us like the waters of Marah, a cup of bitterness; but it may be to us also like the waters of Siloam, a cup of health. If we abuse it, it may stupify us, or intoxicate us with pride and presumption and vain glory, or madden us with frenzy and fury. But if we mix with it the divine elements of Repentance, Humility, Faith, and Hope, and Love, it may by God's mercy become to us a Cup of living waters, a Cup of Blessing, an Eucharistic Cup, a Cup of immortal joy.

VII. How then shall we receive it?

The first use to be made of it is this:—In times of National Visitations, we are too apt to ascribe our sufferings to mere secondary causes. When God sends us a Famine or Pestilence, we are too prone to charge them upon some derangement in the elements, or on some noxious vapours in the atmosphere, or some defects in husbandry, drainage or ventilation; which may indeed be the *occasions*, but are certainly not the *sole causes*, of the evil.

When Judæa was visited by a Famine in the reign of King David, there were, it is probable, many speculations about its cause. But how few guessed the truth,—that it was for the cruelty and perfidy of their former King, *because he slew the Gibeonites*<sup>3</sup>. And when an

in the fierce struggle of a religious conflict, of which the melancholy discords and contentions at the Holy Sepulchre are but a prelude and epitome. And however this may be, yet when Europe itself has almost become a Camp, where will the end be? *How long will it be ere thou be quiet? put up thyself into thy scabbard, rest, and be still, O thou sword of the Lord.* Jer. xlvii. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. lxxv. 9.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Sam. xxi. 1.



Epidemic raged at Corinth in the time of St. Paul, many perhaps ascribed it to the atmosphere or other physical agency ; how few divined the cause which the holy Apostle, who was admitted to the secrets of the Most High, was enabled to reveal,—that it was sent as a chastisement for profanation of the Lord's house and of the Lord's table. "*For this cause,*" he says, "many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep <sup>4</sup>."

In like manner, when we are involved in a War, we are wont to ascribe the calamity, it may be, to diplomatic or legislative incompetency, or to the ambition, dissimulation, or treachery of those who are arrayed against us. We allow our minds to dwell on such topics as these, and we cherish the feelings, and are absorbed in the thoughts, which they inspire. And while our minds are thus engrossed with secondary considerations, we are deaf to the solemn truths which Almighty God all the while is proclaiming in our ears almost with the voice of thunder, and we are almost blind to the lightnings that He is flashing in our eyes. War is God's Ambassador. It is sent to preach to us of our own sins. It says, *Consider your ways* <sup>5</sup>. It comes to us like the Baptist in the wilderness, and cries aloud, *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.*

Think not therefore, my brethren, that if we succeed in removing the mere secondary causes of these National Visitations, we shall therefore remove the evil itself. We may ventilate our houses, we may cleanse our streets,—we ought to do so. We may rout our enemies. But we cannot thus destroy the destroying Angels of God. We cannot empty His quiver of His Arrows, *made ready against us for our sins* <sup>6</sup>. We

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 30.

<sup>5</sup> Hag. i. 5. 7. Amos iii. 6. Isa. xlv. 7.

<sup>6</sup> Ps. vii. 14.

cannot pluck the thunderbolts from the right hand of Omnipotence. No! we must begin with ourselves. We must cleanse our own Hearts. They must be softened and ventilated with the divine breezes of the Holy Spirit. They must be purified by penitential tears and the living waters of the Gospel and the blood of Christ. We must *cease to do evil, and learn to do well*<sup>7</sup>. We must wage War against our own evil passions and evil practices, we must cherish within us the heavenly motions of peace and love.

Here then is a primary use of these Visitations. *When Thy Judgments, O God, are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness*<sup>8</sup>. *When the Lord's voice crieth unto the city, the man of wisdom shall see Thy Name: Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it*<sup>1</sup>.

VIII. But here it may, perhaps, be alleged, that when we are speaking of National Sins and the consequent need of National Repentance and Restoration, we are dealing with a subject which intimately concerns the Rulers of a Nation, but is of little relevancy to private individuals like ourselves, who ought to examine every one the *plague of his own heart*<sup>2</sup>, and to apply himself mainly to the amendment of his own life.

It is very true we must each begin with judging ourselves, especially at such seasons as the present. *When the host goeth forth against thine enemies, then keep thee from every wicked thing*<sup>3</sup>.

But surely this is a small part of the duty of any one, especially of the Ministers of Religion. *We are all members one of another*. We must pray not only

<sup>7</sup> Isa. i. 16, 17.

<sup>8</sup> Isa. xxvi. 9.

<sup>1</sup> Micah vi. 9.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Kings viii. 38.

<sup>3</sup> Deut. xxiii. 9.

for ourselves, but for our country. *O pray for the peace of Jerusalem, they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness within thy palaces*<sup>4</sup>. We must imitate the holy Daniel, who confessed not only his own sins, but the sins of his people and of his forefathers. *O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against Thee*<sup>5</sup>. And he was therefore visited by an Angel, and received a prophecy of the Messiah.

We must imitate the holy Jeremiah, whose *eyes ran down with rivers of tears for the sin and punishment of his people*<sup>6</sup>. We must imitate the Lord Himself, Who wept over His own city when it was about to destroy Him<sup>7</sup>.

This duty is specially incumbent on the Ministers of Religion. The Prophets of old were commanded to declare God's will, though *briers and thorns were with them, and though they dwelt among scorpions*<sup>8</sup>. And the false teachers were rebuked because they *healed slightly the hurt of the daughter of His people, saying, Peace, peace, when there was no peace*<sup>9</sup>, and *spake smooth things and prophesied deceits*<sup>1</sup>, and *built up a wall and daubed it with untempered mortar*<sup>2</sup>. And if the watchmen of Israel will not sound an alarm, and lift up their voice as a trumpet, and *shew the people their transgression and the house of Jacob their sins*<sup>3</sup>, they will be condemned as faithless recreants at the great Day of Account.

It is, ever has been, and ever will be, the para-

<sup>4</sup> Ps. cxxii. 6, 7.

<sup>6</sup> Jer. ix. 1; xiii. 17. Lam. ii. 18.

<sup>7</sup> Luke xix. 41.

<sup>9</sup> Jer. vi. 14; viii. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Ezek. xiii. 10.

<sup>5</sup> Dan. ix. 8. 20, 21.

<sup>8</sup> Ezek. ii. 6, 7.

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xxx. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Isa. lviii. 1.

mount duty of God's Ministers to combat popular fallacies and maintain unpopular truths.

Let this then be affirmed. It is not enough to own a Divine Providence governing all things in heaven and earth. A Deist may do this. But we Christians must do more. We must assert that Jesus Christ, Who is the Head of the Church, is also King of the World. He is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. He is the Arbiter of the destiny of Nations. And it is our duty to declare, that if a Nation will not dedicate herself to Christ, and honour Him by the public homage of National Acts, she is guilty of National Sin, and must expect National Punishment<sup>4</sup>. The Nation and Kingdom that will not serve Thee (says God Himself concerning Christ and His Church) *shall perish*<sup>5</sup>.

And if it was the duty of God's Prophets of old to proclaim such truths as these, when the governing power was in the hands of a few, how much more requisite is it that Christ's Ministers should enounce them now in a free Nation like our own! There is scarcely a single member of a Christian Congregation in England, who has not directly or indirectly some influence on public affairs. Here, my brethren, you have a high privilege; here also is a heavy responsibility. Each of you imparts some impulse and vibration to public opinion, and you are all, more or less, accountable for National Acts.

The duties of Christ's Ministers have been much modified within the last three centuries in England by the liberal extension of franchises to almost all classes of the community. What were once Sermons

<sup>4</sup> On this, and some other topics in this Discourse, the Author begs leave to refer to the Lecture recently delivered at Perth by the Bishop of St. Andrew's, and reprinted in the "Scottish Ecclesiastical Journal," No. 41.

<sup>5</sup> Isa. lx. 12.

*ad Aulam* must now be Sermons *ad Populum*. We shall be very false to our Master, unless we endeavour to maintain a sense of National Responsibility in the National heart, and to inspire it with a deep and awful sense of the necessity of National Repentance and National Restoration<sup>6</sup>.

IX. How then is this to be done ?

Christ, we reply, is Lord of the Universe, to *Him* all power in heaven and earth is given<sup>7</sup>. If a Nation will not obey Him, He will utterly pluck it up<sup>8</sup>. All Kings shall bow down before Him, all Nations shall do Him service<sup>9</sup>. What God has promised to Christ that Kings and Nations shall do, that, we may be sure, is their duty to do.

And now let us advert to ourselves.

X. Have we heeded these Divine Declarations ?

In former times, in England, we had our National Assemblies of religious Fast and Festival ; and Princes, Prelates, Nobles, Senators, and People bowed down as one man before Christ in lowly adoration. Nor was this all. England presented to Christ her National Sin-offerings, Freewill-offerings, and Thank-offerings. How many of our religious Fabrics, dedicated to the honour of His Name for the preaching of His Gospel, the administration of His Sacraments, and the salvation of His People, are due to National Piety ! But

<sup>6</sup> "All persons," says Burke, ("Reflections on the French Revolution,") "possessing any portion of power, ought to be strongly and awfully impressed with an idea that they act in trust, and that they are to account for their conduct in that trust, to the One Great Master, Author, and Founder of Society. This principle ought even to be more strongly impressed upon the minds of those who possess the collective sovereignty than upon those of single Princes."

<sup>7</sup> Matt. xxviii. 18.

<sup>8</sup> Jer. xii. 17.

<sup>9</sup> Ps. lxxii. 11.

<sup>1</sup> Particularly those built under the provisions of the several Acts

now a change has come over us. England seems almost ashamed of the Cross imprinted on her forehead, and to be almost ready to wipe it off as a stain and a blemish. Where are her Thank-offerings to Christ, where her Sin-offerings? She is spending countless treasures on National Secular Buildings, and she is now constrained to give in a single year, for the expenses of a War, a much larger sum than she has devoted in the last forty years of her prosperity to the honour and service of the Prince of Peace<sup>2</sup>.

Bear with me, my Brethren, when I ask one question. If the many millions of money now requisite for the commencement of a War had been dedicated to Christ, in reclaiming the many myriads of those whom He died to redeem, and who are wandering in the wildernesses of our cities, scattered and *troubled because they have no shepherd*<sup>3</sup>, then, who can say, but that He Who *fashions Nations* in His Hand, to *make* and to *mar* them, as the *Potter* does *the Clay*<sup>3</sup>, and to

of Anne, c. 22, 1 Geo. I. c. 23, 58 Geo. III. c. 45. A suggestion for a legislative measure, founded on these Acts, may be seen in the Bishop of London's Proposals for Additional Churches Fund, 1836.

If these pious dispositions of the Legislature did not produce all the benefit that was designed by them, it may be observed that the grants do not seem to have been made to depend (as surely ought to be the case) on *private* efforts made to *meet those of public grants*, and thus they had a tendency to become a *substitute* for private exertion instead of an *encouragement* to it.

<sup>2</sup> In 1818 (in pursuance of 58 Geo. III. c. 45) *one million* was given in aid of building Churches in populous places: in 1824 (by 5 Geo. IV. c. 102) *half a million* was voted for a similar purpose. These two grants being judiciously administered by Her Majesty's Church Commissioners, have been instrumental in promoting the erection of about Five Hundred Churches. No such grant has been made since that time. And we are now giving Six Millions for the beginning of a War.

<sup>3</sup> Zech. x. 2. Jer. xviii. 2. 6.

Whom *the Nations* are but as a drop in a bucket, and as the small dust of the balance, and He taketh up the Isles as a very little thing<sup>4</sup>; and Who has the hearts of kings in His Hand, and refraineth the spirit of princes<sup>5</sup>; and Who says, *Them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed*<sup>6</sup>; and maketh a man's enemies to be at peace with him, when his ways please the Lord<sup>7</sup>,—would have spared us this vast expenditure of treasure and the probable effusion of blood, whether our own or of others—and all the miseries of War?

God is the only Author of wealth, wisdom, and power; and we are justly chargeable with Infidelity if we act on the presumption that we can be wealthy, wise, and powerful as a Nation, without providing for His service and the maintenance of His glory. We may not dare to imagine that in our plans for National Prosperity we may leave God out of the account, and that, by ingenious systems of worldly prudence and policy, we may provide a substitute for Omnipotence, and can produce public Happiness and public Security by secular Statutes, and Fleets, and Armies, and may exclude from our Councils and our Laws the Alpha and Omega of His Gospel. No! God is not so mocked: He is all in all; His Laws are eternal; His Judgments are irresistible. If we sow without Him, we sow *the wind, and we shall reap the whirlwind*<sup>8</sup>. *Woe to them, saith the Lord, that take counsel but not of Me, and that cover with a covering but not of My Spirit, that they may add sin to sin*<sup>9</sup>. *Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks, walk in the light of your fire, and in*

<sup>4</sup> Isa. xl. 15.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 30.

<sup>8</sup> Hos. viii. 7.

<sup>5</sup> Prov. xxi. 1. Ps. lxxvi. 12.

<sup>7</sup> Prov. xvi. 7.

<sup>9</sup> Isa. xxx. 1.

*the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of Mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow*<sup>1</sup>.

Therefore, especially in days like these, when the Lord is *making bare His Holy Arm in the eyes of the Nations*<sup>2</sup>, let us not hesitate to declare what He Himself has taught us, that Policy without Piety cannot prosper; that a Nation in order to be happy must be holy; and that if a State labours mainly for secular ends, and does not first exert herself to afford the means of Divine knowledge and of Divine grace to her people, who cry to her for aid by their numbers and by their crimes, then, whatever outward semblance there may be of health in her countenance for a time, yet the heart of that Nation is unsound, there is a mortal disease rankling in her bosom.

XI. But it may perhaps be said, that we speak rashly and inconsiderately if we apply such language to ourselves. We are now *disabled*, it is alleged, by our *religious divisions*, from making any National Thank-offerings to Christ. It may be so. But then, we must add, here is our sin; here is our punishment; here is our need of amendment. For, whence is our National wealth? From God. *Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the Victory, and the majesty. Both riches and honour come of Thee, and Thou reignest over all*<sup>3</sup>. And if so, then are we bound to offer to God a portion—yes, a large and the best portion—of His own gifts. It is our *privilege*, our *happiness*, and our *reward*, to be *able* to do so. And therefore the pious king exclaimed, “Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be *able* to offer so *willingly* after this sort? For all things come of Thee, O Lord, and of *Thine own have*

<sup>1</sup> Isa. l. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. lii. 10.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Chron. xxix. 11, 12.



*we given Thee* <sup>4</sup>." If, then, we are *disabled* from giving to Christ,—if we have forfeited the privilege of making offerings to God,—here is our loss, our penalty, our misery—over which we ought to mourn. If God has taken away from us as a Nation the power of giving to Him,—if our heavenly Father turns His face from us, and will not accept offerings from us, alas for us! And how, is it said, has this come to pass? How have we forfeited the will and the power to give to God? By our *religious divisions*. And do they improve the matter? Are they pleasing in Christ's sight? Can they exempt us from guilt? Can they be pleaded in arrest of God's judgments? Nay, rather they are condemned by Him as works of the flesh <sup>5</sup> and of our ghostly enemy, and as exposing us to His wrath.

What, then, must be done? We must endeavour to *heal* our divisions. This may be a difficult task. All noble things are difficult <sup>6</sup>. With man it may be impossible, but not with God. Man's difficulties are God's opportunities. Our midnight is His noon. He can turn the heart of a whole Nation back again <sup>7</sup>. What did the Holy Spirit do on this day <sup>8</sup>? He changed a handful of timid Galilæans into a noble army of Martyrs. Shall we then *say, there is no hope* <sup>1</sup>? Is *the Lord's hand shortened that it cannot save* <sup>2</sup>? Are we to be daunted with difficulties? Is the Church of God to have no more Calebs? no more Elijahs? no more Peters? It was not a Preacher of the Gospel, but it was an English Statesman, who said,—“How often has Public Calamity been arrested on the brink of ruin

<sup>4</sup> 1 Chron. xxix. 14.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 3. Gal. v. 19—21. James iii. 16.

<sup>6</sup> χαλεπὰ τὰ καλὰ.

<sup>7</sup> 1 Kings xviii. 37.

<sup>8</sup> Whit-Sunday, when this was preached.

<sup>1</sup> Jer. ii. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. lix. 1.

by the seasonable energy of a single man! I am as sure as I am of my being, that one vigorous mind, confiding in the aid of God, and full of just reliance in his own fortitude, enterprise, and perseverance, would first draw to him some few like himself, and then that multitudes hardly thought to be in existence would appear and troop about him. Why should not a Maccabæus and his brethren arise to assert the honour of the ancient Law, and defend the Temple of their forefathers<sup>3</sup>?"

Yes, my brethren, why not? We want more faith in God, more faith in the Gospel, more faith in the religious heart of England. We are too prone to despair, too diffident of the good cause. There is yet life amongst us, the pulse still beats. Can any doubt this who beheld the religious aspect of England on the 26th of last April, the day of Public Humiliation? And can we have National *Fasts*, can we have National *Prayers*, and may we not, *must* we not, also have National *Almsgiving*—Almsgiving to the Souls—the immortal souls of millions of our poorer brethren in our populous cities, for whom Christ died upon the cross?

*Is this such a fast as I have chosen*, will not God now say to England, if her fast bears *no such fruits* as these,—and if, like the barren fig tree, it is prodigal only of leaves,—*a day*, a single day—twelve hours—*for a man to afflict his soul and to bow down his head as a bulrush?* Wilt thou call *this* a fast, and an *acceptable day to the Lord!* *Is not this rather the fast that I have chosen, to deal thy bread to the hungry—to deal the bread of life to the famishing souls in thy vast cities? Then shalt thou cry, and the Lord shall answer: then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy darkness be as*

<sup>3</sup> Burke's Works, vol. vii. p. 366. Ed. Lond. 1826.

*the noonday, and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in*<sup>4</sup>.

XII. But to such an appeal as this it may perhaps be replied, that Religion is indeed necessary to a State, but that a Nation may safely leave the cause of Christianity to its own inherent powers, which are of Divine origin, and to the *private efforts* of individuals. And reference is sometimes made to the example of another State, which, it is said, is flourishing without a National Religion, and even to our own Country, in which a religious spirit, stimulated by *private energy*, has displayed itself in recent times<sup>5</sup>.

Doubtless Almighty God can and will sustain Christianity not only independently of, but in opposition to, all worldly powers. But can a Nation be sustained without Religion? Can a Christian State discard the Gospel, renounce Christianity, and yet hope to escape the worst evils which men may perpetrate or endure? Heaven forbid, my brethren, that we should have any fears for Christianity! Our fears are not for Christianity, no, but for Nations apostatizing from it. We know, from the sure word of Prophecy, that many Nations of this world *will beleader the beloved city*, and will take up arms against it, and that *fire from heaven will descend upon them and devour them*<sup>6</sup>. And

<sup>4</sup> Isa. lviii. 5—12.

<sup>5</sup> We are, perhaps, too prone to magnify ourselves at the expense of our forefathers.

It is true that great religious efforts have been made by private individuals in the last ten years; but, after all, we must not forget that, at the close of the last century, which some are apt to consider as only a time of spiritual sleep and death, “the Church of England supplied religious accommodation (in her Churches and Chapels) for *very nearly half the people*; whereas she *now* contributes *less than a third*.”—Religious Census Report, p. 111.

<sup>6</sup> Rev. xx. 9.

Heaven forbid, that our own beloved Country should be one of these!

We see, indeed, one modern example in a mighty Republic,—one united to ourselves by the dearest ties—having no form of National Religion, and yet enjoying at present great temporal prosperity. But that Nation is as yet a new Nation, and we are not speaking of National Prosperity to be attained once, but of National Prosperity to be preserved, of National Prosperity to be recovered. And there is a great difference between the responsibilities of such a State as that, prevented it may be, in some degree, by some original difficulties in its constitution, from providing for itself the blessings of true religion, and those of a Nation like England, richly endowed by God with those blessings, and yet falling away from the public profession and maintenance of National Christianity<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> And, after all, the religious condition of America is deplored by some of its most candid and pious men. And see also the statements in the late Charge of the Bishop of Fredericton on the subject. The recent debates in the Congress at Washington concerning Mormonism and Polygamy, to say nothing of Slavery, read a warning on the consequences arising from the abandonment of religious principle in Governments, and exhibit in a strong light the impotence to which they are reduced by being thus disabled from dealing with even the elementary principles of morals and social relationship, affecting the happiness of every family and individual in that Nation.

As far as the example of America proves any thing as yet, it shews the importance of a National Provision for Religion. For Religion is in the most prosperous state in the Diocese of New York, where endowments have been guaranteed to the Episcopal Church by national faith.

Dr. Arnold speaks thus on the case of America:—

“Not to speak of the ancient World—where it was a thing unheard of for a State to be without its National Worship, its temples, its festivals, its priests—the whole Christian World, from the time that Governments have become Christian, has acted uniformly on the same principle, with the single exception of the

And may we not be permitted to say that the happiness of a Nation ought to be measured, not by mere temporary results, but by reference to the highest ends of our immortal being<sup>8</sup>? We must not allow ourselves to be dazzled by any ephemeral splendours of secular prosperity, but must calmly enquire, whether a Nation can be said to enjoy true dignity, liberty, glory and happiness, if it does not consecrate itself to God by a solemn act of religious dedication? The world has never seen any proof that a State which fails to do this *can* be really *free*,—*free from* the tyranny of licentiousness and fanaticism, cheating the people with presumptuous theories of civil government and with monstrous delusions, tampering with the most awful concerns of the supernatural world, and *using divination and enchantments, and provoking God to anger*<sup>9</sup>; and *free from* such impure libertinage as that of a second Mahometanism (I mean Mormonism)—and *free to* perform the highest functions of a State, to diffuse religious Truth and maintain religious Unity, which are the greatest blessings and the surest safeguards of a Nation, and beautify the lives of individuals and families, and secure for men peace on earth, and in heaven a glorious immortality<sup>1</sup>.

Yet more, we do not hesitate to affirm that a Nation

United States of America, where the evil Spirit of Sectarianism has wrought his perfect work.”—Principles of Church Reform, p. 14. London, 1833.

<sup>8</sup> “We count those Rulers happy,” (says St. Augustine, De Civ. Dei, v. 24, speaking of Monarchies,) “who reign justly, and make their power to be a handmaid to the Divine Majesty, for the greatest advancement of His worship; who fear, love, and honour God . . . and who do not neglect to offer to their own true God the Sacrifice of Humiliation, Mercy, and Supplication for their sins.” . . . And may not the same be said of all States?

<sup>9</sup> 2 Kings xvii. 17.

<sup>1</sup> The words of Bishop Butler deserve consideration:—“A consti-

which has not her eyes fixed on the stars and her heart in heaven, but looks earthward, and idolizes mechanical powers and material results, and is engaged in 'an incessant and sabbathless pursuit'<sup>2</sup> of worldly fortune, is already suffering a severe *punishment*, although she may be unconscious of her misery, and even exult in her degradation; she is lying under a penal ban, condemned to slave and drudge in the brick-kilns of Egypt, and to *lie among the pots*, instead of aspiring to heaven and having the wings of a dove, *which is covered with silver wings, and her feathers like gold*<sup>3</sup>.

### XIII. Once more.

It has been said, that our own age is one of religious

tution of civil government without any religious Establishment is a chimerical project of which there is no example, and which leaving the generality without guide and instruction must leave religion to be forgotten and sunk amongst them, and at the same time give full scope to superstition and the gloom of enthusiasm, which last, especially, ought surely to be diverted and checked as far as it can be done without force.

"Now a reasonable Establishment provides instruction for the ignorant, withdraws them, not in the way of force but of guidance, from running after those kind of conceits. It doubtless has a tendency likewise to keep up a sense of real religion and real Christianity in a Nation, and is moreover necessary for the encouragement of learning, some parts of which the Scripture Revelation absolutely requires should be cultivated.

"It is to be remarked further, that the value of any particular religious establishment is not to be estimated merely by what it is in itself, but also by what it is in comparison with those of other nations. And the value of our own ought to be very much heightened in our esteem by considering what it is a security from; I mean that great corruption of Christianity, popery, which is ever hard at work to bring us again under its yoke." (Bp. Butler's Sermon, preached before the House of Lords at Westminster Abbey, on the King's Accession, A.D. 1747.)

<sup>2</sup> Bacon.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 13.

revival, due to *private exertions*, which are sufficient, it is thought by some, to restore the English Nation to a sound religious State.

Let us bless God indeed for whatever renewal has taken place of religious life among us; and let us not relax any of our voluntary efforts in behalf of the Gospel. Let us not plead for public aid to supersede private exertion, but rather to remove the restraints with which it is fettered, and to elicit, encourage, invigorate, and quicken it, especially in poor and populous places. Let us plead for means of fuller development of that religious spirit to which we refer.

Let us make a *voluntary* dedication of ourselves to God; and let us also plead in behalf of the Nation, that it may enjoy the honour and blessing of making *voluntary*<sup>4</sup> offerings to Christ for His glory and ser-

<sup>4</sup> The terms "*Voluntaryism*," and "*Voluntary principle*," as commonly employed, afford a striking illustration of the *confusion of ideas*, and consequent *errors in practice*, arising from abuse of words. A Legislative Statute, confirmed by the Crown, is the only known exponent of the National *Volition* or *Will*. But those who profess to be advocates of the *Voluntary principle*, would *prohibit* Rulers and Nations from giving *voluntarily* to God, by an official act of the National Will. They would deprive a Nation of the power of expressing its *Will* in its highest and best interests!

And by *limiting to themselves* the term "*Voluntaryists*," they impute to others the absurd and unchristian opinion that it is *not* the duty of *every individual* to give *voluntarily* the best of his substance to God.

But the faithful Christian knows and affirms that it is the duty of a Nation to give *voluntarily*, and in addition to this, that it is also the duty of *every one* in the Nation to give *voluntarily* the first and best fruits of his means to God.

Therefore the faithful Christian is the true *Voluntaryist*; he alone is the Advocate of the *Voluntary principle* in the largest sense of the term.

In the confusion above noticed, we see an example of the same tyranny in the abuse of words as is observable in the popular ac-

vice. Christ our Redeemer and King has a claim both on Nations and Individuals; and their true wealth consists in giving the best they have to Him from Whom they derive the whole.

The public aid now given by the Nation to private efforts in the erection of Schools, and in the cause of *Education*, has been wisely made to depend on the concurrence of private efforts to meet that aid, and has been far from stifling those efforts; on the contrary, it has greatly accelerated and multiplied them<sup>5</sup>. And may we not expect similar results from like agency in behalf of the *means of grace*, without which Instruction is worthless, and will prove a national bane, instead of a blessing? And even *if* the result of *private* efforts for the promotion of Christianity in our great cities were satisfactory, who would not regret that the Nation should forfeit the high privilege of

ceptance of the word *Freethinker*. As if a man does not *think freely* when he believes in God! And as if, *in order to think freely*, it is necessary that he should believe that he himself and his fellow-creatures are no better than the beasts that perish!

<sup>5</sup> As may be seen in recent Reports of the National Society and other public documents, especially from the Census Report on Education, just published, which shews that since public grants to School building have been made, the erection of School buildings has been greatly multiplied. These grants date their origin from 1833. The *whole* number of Schools supported by religious bodies is now 10,595. Of these, the number built between 1811 and 1831 was 1900; whereas the number built between 1831—1851, was 7021.

Some persons, who gladly avail themselves of, and mainly rely on, public aid for the building of *Training Colleges* and *Schools*, and for their annual support,—although by the terms of the acceptance of that aid the system of those Colleges and Schools is liable to be swayed by a power over which they have no control,—have yet (strange to say!) been heard to condemn public grants in aid of building Churches in poor and populous places, although in that case, from the guarantees afforded by a Liturgy, and an ordained Ministry bound by solemn stipulations, there is no similar danger of a disturbing interference from without.



promoting Religion by National Acts, thus bringing down from God a blessing on all her undertakings at home and abroad <sup>6</sup> ?

But is the result satisfactory? The Nation has replied to this question.

XIV. In the year 1851 she numbered the people, and from the result of the Census published by herself, it appears that nearly a third of our population take no part in any form of Public Worship of Almighty God on the Lord's Day <sup>7</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> And so likewise redeem a pledge given in its name.

In the autumn of the year 1830 it was said by the Heads of the Government, that "the Church must do something for itself before it called on the Legislature" to do any thing for Religion in this way (Bishop of Lincoln's Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, 1838, p. 23); and therefore the Ecclesiastical Commission was formed, 1834 (*ibid*, p. 8), and its Reports were embodied in Statutes of the Realm 1836—1840.

The covenant then entered into between the Nation and the Clergy has been performed by the Clergy as far as their revenues are concerned.

But what has yet been done on the part of the Nation?

<sup>7</sup> Census of Religious Worship in England and Wales, presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty, London, 1853, p. cliv.

The Bishop of London states in a recent pastoral Letter (May 2, 1854), that "since 1836, the population of the *Metropolis* has continued to increase at the rate of not less than 30,000 *per annum*; so that there are now more than *Half a Million* of Souls wholly destitute of the means of public worship and of the benefits of pastoral superintendence."

It appears from a recent statement put forth by the Rector of St. James's (May 18, 1854), that in the Churches and Chapels of the Church of England in that Parish, where it might reasonably be supposed the duty of providing for the spiritual needs of the poor might (if any where) be safely left to private munificence, there are only 810 free sittings for a population of 20,000 Poor.

The Religious Census Report says (p. clix.), "all spontaneous efforts are hopeless in the denser districts, peopled by the rank and file of industry."

May we not say, my brethren, that this avowal from our own lips is, almost by a remarkable coincidence, a public confession on our part of God's Justice in sending His Judgments upon us? It is a refutation of the cavils of the Sceptic arraiging God's goodness on the ground of these calamities. It is a National avowal of our sinfulness, and of our consequent need of self-abasement, repentance, and amendment.

XV. The consideration of the particular means by which this work of Restoration may be effected, must be reserved for future Discourses.

Let us now implore God to pour into our hearts the spirit of grace and supplication, that we *may look on Him Whom we have pierced* <sup>3</sup>.

Arms are of little avail abroad unless we have peace at home; and we cannot have peace without the Spirit of Peace. Moses must pray on the mountain while Joshua fights on the plain<sup>1</sup>. We cannot have any just hope of National prosperity unless we return to Christ, and obey and adore Him Who is the God of battles<sup>2</sup>, as well as the Prince of Peace. And if we will not confess this truth willingly, and act upon it spontaneously, we shall be made to learn it by severer sufferings. And at the great Day, when Christ shall come again in His glorious majesty to judge the quick and dead, and all men and all things shall be put under His feet, then we shall wonder and weep at our own faithlessness and infatuation in relying on our own strength, instead of obeying and adoring Him. Therefore let us be wise in time. Let us not be daunted by any fear of failure. Failure is impossible. Our

<sup>3</sup> Zech. xii. 10.

<sup>1</sup> Exod. xvii. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. xxiv. 8.

efforts may not succeed in this world<sup>3</sup>. But we shall be doing God's will, and promoting His glory, and therefore we cannot fail. We shall have earned an immortal crown, and be more than Conquerors in Eternity. Therefore let us say, *I will not trust in my bow, it is not my sword that shall help me; but it is Thou that savest us from our enemies, and putttest them to confusion that hate us*<sup>4</sup>. *Salvation hath God appointed for walls and bulwarks*<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, O Lord, *revive Thy work in the midst of the years*<sup>6</sup>. Make us to see the things that *belong to our peace*, before they are *hid from our eyes*<sup>7</sup>. *Strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die*<sup>8</sup>. Grant that we may be the *repairers of the breach, the restorers of paths to dwell in*. Then, O Lord, Thou wilt be the strength of our health, and wilt *cover our head in the day of battle*<sup>9</sup>. Then, if the *enemy should come in as a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him*<sup>1</sup>. And when we have *hearkened to Thy Commandments*, then will *our peace be as a river, and our righteousness as the waves of the sea*<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> "As if," says Lord Bacon (*Adv. of Learning*, p. 191), "it were not a thing much more happy to fail in good ends for the public than to obtain all that we can wish ourselves in our proper fortunes."

<sup>4</sup> Ps. xlv. 7, 8.

<sup>5</sup> Isa. xxvi. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Hab. iii. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Luke xix. 42.

<sup>8</sup> Rev. iii. 2.

<sup>9</sup> Ps. cxl. 7.

<sup>1</sup> Isa. lix. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. xlvi. 18.

## NOTE.

### ON PUBLIC GRANTS IN AID OF RELIGION.

REASONS have been assigned above (p. 23) by way of objection to the term "*Voluntary Principle*" as commonly used, and, these being premised, it may not be irrelevant to annex some remarks on the question of public Grants in aid of Religion, in addition to those which have been already made on that subject in the preceding Discourse.

There is something flattering to man's vanity in the idea that he can achieve a great work by his own unassisted strength; and if he allows or desires others to help him, he will probably appeal to those, and only those, whom he loves and respects. Hence, in the temper with which many members of the Church regard the civil power in this country at this time, it need not be a matter of surprise that they should discourage an appeal to that power for public grants in aid of religion. They look on the State as little better than a Sanballat, and treat it accordingly<sup>1</sup>. This may seem to be Faith. But true Faith is wise, humble, and loving. And there may be a considerable alloy of error, pride, and uncharitableness in this spirit and practice.

For, in the mean time, we must remember there is a third party to be considered, viz. the Poor in our populous cities. What is their condition? What their prospects?

Thirty years have passed since any public grant was made in aid of building Churches<sup>2</sup>. These thirty years have been years of peace and plenty; and during a great part of them much attention has been given to the state of the Poor.

Private zeal has, therefore, had ample scope as well as urgent cause for exertion in this period.

Yet we find the following facts among others:—

<sup>1</sup> Nehem. ii. 20.

<sup>2</sup> One grant was made in 1818 of £1,000,000, and followed in 1822 by a grant of £500,000.

1. The Church of England provided religious accommodation for half the population at the beginning of this century, but she now provides accommodation only for less than a third.

2. The annual Subscriptions to the "Incorporated Church Building Society,"—a Voluntary Association formed and administered under the highest auspices in the Church—do not amount to thirteen hundred pounds.

3. The spiritual condition of the metropolis generally, as described by the Bishop of the Diocese, and that of one of the most favoured parishes in the metropolis, as represented by the Rector, has been already noticed above (p. 25).

4. The true measure of the adequacy of private efforts is not to be looked for in the erection of religious *buildings*, but in the provision of a *regular maintenance* for public worship and the Ministers of the Word and Sacraments in them, and for the religious superintendence of those around them. The real test of its efficiency is not to be sought for in Church *Building*, but in Church *Endowment*.

And it is much to be feared that, in proportion to the need, very little indeed has been effected by private efforts in *this* respect during the last thirty years.

However we have the happiness of observing the results produced in Church Building by private munificence, stimulated as it has been in the Diocese of London by the exhortation and example of the Bishop. Yet these can hardly be regarded as general and permanent. Many of them are due to local, personal, and temporary causes and considerations; they may almost be described, in some cases, as happy accidents; they afford no sufficient ground for reliance on private efforts alone for regular systematic and permanent religious superintendence of the whole population, and for affording them the means of Christian Worship and spiritual grace.

It may, indeed, be said, that such a conclusion as this is an impeachment of the Divine authority of Christianity, and is refuted by its history, which shews that by means of private efforts it achieved conquests over States.

But the case before us is very different. The powers of a State like England have a paternal character, with corresponding responsibilities and obligations, particularly to provide for the spiritual welfare of the people. And if this duty is omitted, it cannot be expected that Almighty God will intervene to bless the labours of individuals for the recovery of the State, as He did bless in a miraculous manner the efforts of those who were instrumental in the work of converting the State to Christianity. It may rather be feared, that He will punish us as a Nation in those places where we

have neglected to do our duty—He will chastise us by turbulence and faction in our large towns.

On the whole, it would appear that it is necessary to take good care in considering this important question, not to inflict an injury on the Poor by cherishing party jealousies, and not to damage the State by endeavouring to disable it, or discourage it in the performance of its duties, and so to divest it of its highest privileges, and to rob it of its moral strength and dignity. Nor, on the other hand, should we forget the vitality and power which may be elicited from the hearts of individuals; but we may rather believe, that our true strength and happiness lie in the combination of the stability, regularity, and uniformity of public, with the sensibility, zeal, and independence of private energies, and that they may be so proportioned and balanced (as has been remarkably proved in the case of public grants to Education), that the one may generate and invigorate the other, and both conspire together in a happy alliance to promote the welfare of the community<sup>3</sup>;

“*Alterius sic  
Altera poscit opem res, et conjurat amicè.*”

<sup>3</sup> Some valuable statements and remarks, of a practical character, on this subject, may be found in a pamphlet by a Layman, who has devoted much time and labour and zeal to the question of Church Extension; viz. “The Claim of the Incorporated Church Building Society to more liberal support on the part of members of the Church of England,” pp. 4 and 14—Rivingtons, London, 1853.

## SERMON XXXV.

CENSUS OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.

REV. iv. 8.

“*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.*”

THE Epistle of this day<sup>1</sup> opens to us a view of Heaven. We behold the Triune God, enthroned King of the Universe. The Throne is arched with a Rainbow, formed of rain and sunshine, a record of the Flood for sin, and a pledge of peace; and shewing that the showers of Judgment are gilded by beams of Mercy, in Christ the *Sun of Righteousness*.

And what, as here revealed, will be the employment of heaven? Ascription of glory to God. Worship, never-ending worship. The *Four Living Creatures*, representing the Christian Church, extended to the four Winds of Heaven, and founded on the fourfold Gospel, and living for ever and ever, unite in eternal adoration—they rest not day and night, saying, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty*. And after this ascription of Glory, the Church of the Old Testament<sup>2</sup>, represented

<sup>1</sup> This was preached on Trinity Sunday in the morning, when—there being a celebration of the Holy Communion as well as Morning Prayer—some portions were omitted in the delivery.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Isa. vi. 3. The doctrine of the Trinity was believed by the Ancient Fathers to be *intimated* in the Old Testament as well as *revealed* in the New. See the passages in Waterland, Works, ii. p. 41, Serm. ii.

by the Four and Twenty Elders, takes up the Evangelic Strain, and responds as in a choral Antiphon, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created*<sup>3</sup>.

I. The design of the Church in selecting this portion of Scripture is obvious. She intends thereby to remind us, that life in heaven will be *social*; that its occupation will be Worship, Public Worship, of the Holy Undivided Trinity.

This admonition is practical; the great truth it conveys ought to be the ruling principle of our lives. Of all human societies the Church in heaven is the perfect Archetype; and the Church on earth, in which we are placed, is a reflex of that heavenly Society, and aspires upward to combine itself with it; and when the earthly Church shall be purified from all taint and blemish, it will be absorbed into the heavenly Church, as the inverted liquid arch and wavering reflexion of the sky in clear water aims and verges upwards to meet and melt into the pure and peaceful heaven which it reflects.

Heaven then being our end, our goal, our home, our life upon earth ought to be ministerial and manufactory to the life of heaven. Our habits on earth ought to be so ordered, and our tempers to be so disciplined, that we may be prepared and qualified for the Worship and service of the Triune God in the Church Triumphant and glorified, through the countless ages of Eternity.

II. Hence we may learn to appreciate the blessings we enjoy, and to use them aright.

Many were the conflicts of the primitive Church

<sup>3</sup> The grounds and authorities on which the above interpretations rest may be seen, if desired, in the Author's Lectures on the Apocalypse (Lect. ii. of 3rd edit., or Lect. iv. of earlier editions).



before she was permitted to enjoy undisturbed possession of the great Doctrine embodied in the Scriptures read, and in the Services celebrated, on this great Festival,—the Doctrine of the Ever-blessed Trinity. The Enemy of God and Man envied her this privilege. He would not that the Church on earth should reflect, as in a mirror, the worship of the Church in heaven. He raised up the Photinian, the Sabellian, the Arian, and the Macedonian to wrest it, if possible, from her. But God guarded His own. And now, thanks be to Him, we need not summon Synods to vindicate the Doctrine of the Trinity. We have only to hold fast Scripture, as expounded in the Creeds of the Church.

III. We possess also something more. Those Creeds speak to us of Conflicts, and of Victories over Heresy. We hear in them the din of arms; they have a voice of battles, like the sound of the Trumpet and the Clarion—a note of War. But we have *other* symbols in which this doctrine is announced; and these are symbols of peace. In every Baptism which the Church of Christ administers in quietness and trust, when the Holy Ghost glides down with a silent dove-like descent into the heart of the sleeping Infant, she teaches the doctrine of the Trinity: “I baptize thee, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” In every doxology that she sings in thankfulness and joy, she proclaims this doctrine: “Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.” In every Eucharist that she celebrates, she ascribes all honour to the Ever-blessed Trinity in her Angelic Trisagion. Whenever she blesses her people, or sends them in peace from her courts in the hours of evening to their homes, she invokes that Holy Name as the only source of Grace and Love and Peace: “*The Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and the*

*Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. Amen."*

Thus by seeing what the Church *does*, we know what the Church *believes*; and by joining in her worship on earth we are prepared to worship in heaven.

IV. Yet more; as this day's Festival declares, she proclaims this doctrine to the world by a solemn Anniversary. And since the contemplation of the adorable mystery of the Ever-blessed Trinity is, as it were, the culminating point to which she has ascended by an avenue of blessings, she pauses here on this Day, as one who has gained the summit of a hill, and looks back on the path she has traversed, and surveys the beautiful scenery of preceding Festivals, which have led her up step by step to this glorious elevation, and as if this great Mystery were her final resting-place—"the sabbath and haven" of all her contemplations,—she calls all her succeeding Sundays, even to the end of her year, by the name of the Blessed Trinity.

Indeed, in a certain sense, *all* the Sundays of her year are inscribed to that sacred Name. For every First Day of the week is sacred to God the Father, Who began the work of Creation on that day, and to God the Son, Who arose on that day, and to God the Holy Ghost, Who descended on that day; and in this respect, every Sunday is a Trinity Sunday.

Thus *one day telleth another, and one night certifieth another*<sup>4</sup>. The voice of the Church on earth blends with the music of the Church in heaven. And by joining here in social worship, in the courts of the Lord's House, on these annual and weekly Festivals, consecrated to the Blessed Trinity, we become better qualified by God's grace to join hereafter in the heavenly hallelujahs of that future Festival of the

<sup>4</sup> Ps. xix. 2.

Eternal Sabbath which *remaineth to the people of God*<sup>5</sup>, with the glorious company above which *rests not day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*

V. Let us apply this to ourselves, in connexion with the subject of the present Discourses—the Religious condition of England and the means of Religious Restoration.

We have now been looking upward at a glorious Vision of heaven, displayed by the beloved disciple, *when he was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day*<sup>6</sup>, and revealed to him by the Holy Ghost. *There is the divine standard to which our lives should be referred: the pattern we ought to imitate: the end to which we should aspire.*

Let us now look downward at ourselves. Compare the two pictures. The Contrast is full of warning and instruction.

We have had a View recently presented to us of the spiritual state of our own Country. The recollection of the *heavenly* View which we have just been contemplating will put us on our guard against certain dangerous fallacies, and enable us to form a correct judgment concerning that *earthly* View, to which I would now invite your attention.

A Work has recently appeared, published by authority, as an Appendix to the Census of 1851, and purporting to give a view of our present religious condition. It may be called a Religious Chart of England and Wales. We do not intend to say that in all particulars it is scrupulously exact<sup>7</sup>. Perhaps, in a work like this, perfect accuracy is unattainable. But it is

<sup>5</sup> Heb. iv. 9.

<sup>6</sup> Rev. i. 10.

<sup>7</sup> See some remarks on this subject in a recent Charge by the Ven. the Archdeacon of Nottingham.

published by Authority ; and, it may well be accepted with thankfulness, as a nearer approach to the Truth than any such representation hitherto made.

VI. This being so, let us be permitted to imagine that this Volume had not only been laid on the table of our Legislature, but were placed before the Apostles. Suppose it in the hands of St. John. Suppose that this Map of the religious condition of England were unrolled before him. What would he there see ? what may we suppose would be his reflections upon it ?

He would find it there stated, that more than Five Millions of our population,—that is, nearly a third of the whole,—take no part in any public religious worship of Almighty God on the Lord's Day.

Here is but one part of the evil. These Five Millions are not to be found in Christian Congregations. But *where are* they to be found ? They do *not* join in acts of worship to their Creator, their Redeemer, and their Sanctifier. They slight the mercies, and break the commands, and provoke the wrath, of the Ever-Blessed Trinity, to whose adorable Name the Lord's Day is Sacred, before Whose glorious Majesty ten thousand times ten thousand bend in lowly adoration, and Whose ministers are a flaming fire<sup>s</sup>. They do not listen to God's holy Word, they do not offer prayer and praise to Him, on His Day. *We* know where they are *not*, and what they are *not* doing. And He knows *where* each of them *is* and what each is doing, on the Lord's Day. They do not hallow His Sabbath on earth, and how shall they attain to His Eternal Sabbath in heaven ? They are not partakers of the Divine Nature here, and how can they have the fruition of the glorious Godhead hereafter ?

<sup>s</sup> Heb. i. 7.

Here indeed is a fact that may well fill us with sorrow and alarm. How would St. John feel, how would he speak, if he were present among us?

The Gospel of Christ has now been preached to you for near twenty centuries. The holy Scriptures lie open before you, God has vouchsafed you temporal and spiritual mercies unparalleled in number and price. And yet now, after all, nearly a third part of your people *forsake the assembling of themselves together*<sup>9</sup>, and live almost *without God in the world*. Might not St. John therefore say that in some respects our condition is worse than that of the heathen at Ephesus? They had not what you have; (might not his language be?) God had not done for them what He has done for you. He will not therefore require of them what He will require of you. *To whom much is given of him much will be required*. And if this evil be not arrested your doom will be worse than theirs. If you lose your Religion, you cannot look for any thing so good as Heathenism in its place. For Heathenism was a Religion, and as a Religion it exercised some controul on the conscience and on the conduct of men, by instilling a belief in the existence of invisible Powers who would punish the evil and reward the good. But if you lose Christianity you will sink into Infidelity; you will become Atheists and Blasphemers; you will be the victims of more than all the misery and vice which prevailed in heathen Rome<sup>1</sup>. And you may expect to be objects of fiercer wrath and severer chastisement; for they knew not what you know, they had not the Scriptures and the Sacraments of Christ; but you will have grieved the Holy Ghost, and have apostatized from God's written Truth, and have been rebels against His known Will.

<sup>9</sup> Heb. x. 25.

<sup>1</sup> See Rom. i. 20—32.

VII. Next, even among Christians in England there is much to deplore. The Volume before us is a map of Religion, and that map has many dark colours. It displays not only, as we have seen, a gloomy picture of unbelief, but it exhibits also a melancholy view of *religious dissension*. “*There is one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism,*” says St. Paul. “I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that there be *no divisions* among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in *the same mind and in the same judgment* <sup>2</sup>.” Let us walk by the *same rule*, let us mind the *same thing*, being of *one accord, of one mind* <sup>3</sup>. And whereas there are *strifes and divisions* among you, are ye *not carnal* <sup>4</sup>? And the *carnal mind* (he says) is *enmity with God* <sup>5</sup>. And St. John, in this day’s Epistle, displays to us the countless millions of blessed Spirits in heaven, all glorifying God with one voice. Such is the language and spirit of the Apostles. Such is the temper and employment of heaven. But is it *ours*? Do we regard divisions as fruits of a carnal mind? Is it not rather to be feared that some among us vaunt ourselves and are puffed up in the multitude of our forms of faith, as if they were genuine fruits of a vigorous spiritual life and healthy intellectual energy, and were no disqualifications for heaven?

Must it not, therefore, be said that we look on dissensions with carnal eyes, rather than with a vision illumined by the Spirit of Peace, and purified by the Love of Christ, Who prayed that *we all might be one as He and the Father are One* <sup>6</sup>, and so be prepared and qualified for united worship in heaven.

VIII. Let us here offer a caution against some fal-

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. i. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Phil. ii. 2, and iii. 15.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Rom. viii. 7.

<sup>6</sup> John xvii. 11. 21, 22.

lacics into which some may perhaps be betrayed in reading the Volume before us.

We see the members of the Church of England classed together in one body ; and Dissenting Congregations classed together in another body<sup>7</sup>. And it seems to be imagined by some, that there are *two distinct religious parties* in England, with fixed and definite limits—the *Church* on one side, and *Dissent* on the other.

Surely this is a mistake.

For, first, the members of different dissenting bodies differ as much from one another as they do from the Church ; and therefore they cannot be said to form *one* body, unless *difference* from the Church has become a centre of Unity.

Next, let us remember, Scripture assures us, *There is one Faith, there is one Body*. There is one Church in Heaven ; and there is one Church throughout the world, to which *all Christians* belong. All Christians are members of this one body, though in *health* and *soundness of membership*, and consequently in *profitableness* of membership, they may and do differ widely from each other. They are *all* in the *Field* of the Visible Church Universal, though some may be *Wheat*, and others may be *Tares*. They are all on the *Floor*, though some may be *Grain* and others may be *Chaff*. They are all in the *Net*, though some may be *good Fish* and others may be *bad*. They are all in the *Fold*, though some may be *Sheep* and others *Goats*.

So there is *one* Church in England ; and *all* who profess themselves Christians are members of this one Church. Heaven forbid, therefore, that we should imagine that Dissenters are separated from us by an impassable gulph, or that we should deny that,—as far as they are Christians,—they are members of the same

<sup>7</sup> e. g. in Table 16, p. cxlii.

Church with ourselves. They dissent, it is true, from certain doctrines of the Church, or do not submit to her discipline. But no man can derive truth or grace from Heresy or Schism; and as far as they have truth or grace, they have it by connexion with the Christian Church, the divinely-appointed depository and channel of all spiritual truth and grace to man. As far as they profess *any Christian Truth*, as far as they receive *any Christian Grace*, they are *members of the Church of Christ*. As far, indeed, as they may be in *wilful Schism*, as far as they may hold any *new and erroneous doctrine*, as far as they labour under any spiritual *defect*, they are *not sound* members of the Church; and our duty therefore is, not to take from them what they have, or to deny that they have it, but to labour and pray for them, that, with God's Grace, they may have it *profitably*, and that their *defects* may be *supplied* and their *errors corrected*, and that we may *all dwell together in unity*, they with us and we with them, and that, being partners together in God's Grace here, we may inherit His Glory hereafter, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

IX. Another caution is requisite. The Volume before us presents a "Register of Attendance at *Religious Worship* on the *Lord's Day*."

This is made the test and criterion of the spiritual state, and of the relative efficiency, of Religious Communities.

But here, if we are not on our guard, we may fall into a serious error.

It is true that a Church which does *not* provide the means of *Public Worship* on the *Lord's Day*, fails in the discharge of a primary duty; and that no one can be said to be living the life of a Christian who neglects the means provided for the public worship of God on that day.



The performance of these duties is necessary, but it is far from being all that is necessary. The Ministry of the Christian Church is not to be confined to Churches, and Pulpits, and Altars, or to hours of Public Worship on one day in seven. It does not depend on the rising and setting of the Sun, or on the Cycles of the Week. No; the Christian Ministry is a perpetual Ministry, an universal Ministry, it must endeavour to imitate its Great Author, to be present in all places and at all times. It must endeavour to hallow all place, and to consecrate all time; it must go from house to house, it must catechize Christ's little ones, it must minister the Sacraments, it must kneel at the sick bed, it must minister comfort to the dying, it must visit the wards of the Hospital, the Asylum, the Prison, the Penitentiary; it must be, like the Apostle, *all things to all men, that by all means it may save some*<sup>8</sup>.

We cannot, therefore, judge correctly of the efficiency of any Christian Community, merely from the numbers of its Public Congregations on the Lord's Day. We must enquire also whether its system is Pastoral, Parochial, Diocesan; whether it endeavours to reach the homes and hearts of a people; and what are its relations to the Church of Christ Universal, in all place, and in all time, from the Creation of the World even to the Day of Doom.

We must extend our horizon, and elevate our views even to the Church glorified in Heaven, and enquire whether and how far any religious Community in question prepares men for admission into the Church triumphant, and to take part hereafter in heavenly worship with the beatified Spirits before the Throne, *who will rest not day and night saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty.*

<sup>8</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 22.

We must not form our estimate of the efficiency of a Christian Community on the numerical results of a Sunday Register, but on fixed and eternal principles ; not on Statistical Tables and Arithmetical Calculations, but on the everlasting verities of the Holy Spirit of God.

X. Another caution is necessary. The Volume before us is entitled a "Report of RELIGIOUS WORSHIP;" and *all places purporting* to be places of Religious Worship are registered in it alike, and treated in it indiscriminately. Hence a dangerous confusion may arise in theory and practice. We require here the teaching of the Apostles.

*What* (let us ask) *is Religious Worship?* In *what* does it consist?

Surely it does *not* consist in resorting to a place where our ears may be charmed and our feelings stirred by human eloquence. Preaching is necessary ; it is a divinely appointed ordinance for the salvation of souls. But it is far from being all that is necessary, and it may often be abused. St. Paul warns us that the time *will come* when men will *not endure sound doctrine*, but, after their own lusts, shall heap to themselves Teachers, *having itching ears*<sup>9</sup>.

Nor does Religious Worship consist in listening to Prayers poured forth with a voluble torrent in an extemporaneous effusion from the lips of an individual. Such prayers as these may be criticized by the minds of the hearers, but can they join in them with their hearts? And if they cannot, such Prayers as these cannot rightly be said to form any part of Religious Worship. They may be very offensive to God.

*This* is *not* the worship which was taught by Christ ; when ye pray, say, "Our Father<sup>1</sup>." He gave

<sup>9</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 3.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v. 9.

a form of prayer; and He said, *My House shall be called a House of Prayer*<sup>2</sup> for all Nations, and therefore a House of *united Prayer*, by which, as St. Paul teaches, we may all with one mind and *one mouth* glorify God<sup>3</sup>. This is not the worship practised by the primitive Christians, who are represented by the Holy Ghost in the Acts of the Apostles as all continuing with *one accord* in *prayer and supplication*<sup>4</sup>, and as continuing stedfastly in the *Apostle's doctrine* and fellowship and in *breaking of Bread*,—that is, in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist—and *in prayers*<sup>5</sup>. This is not the Worship revealed to us for imitation on earth, and in which we hope to join in heaven, where *they rest not day and night saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty*.

Let us, therefore, not be deluded by words. What was Religious Worship to the Apostles, what was Religious Worship to Christ upon earth, let that be Religious Worship to *us*. Devout reverence in *common Prayer*, offered by all kneeling on our knees, confessing our sins, praying to God for mercy and for blessings with one mind and one mouth, united together as an army of Suppliants besieging Heaven with prayers; lifting up our voice in united Hosannas, and so imitating on earth the life of Angels in Heaven; and going together with thankful hearts to the Altar of the Lord, and there receiving from His Hand the pledges of His Love and heavenly nourishment for our Souls.

This is religious Worship; this is the Worship in which we join with Apostles, Evangelists, and Martyrs, and with all the Communion of Saints; and which, thanks be to God, we possess in the Ritual of the English Church. This is the Worship with which we

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxi. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. xv. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Acts i. 14.

<sup>5</sup> Acts ii. 42.

must adore God on earth if we desire to be the fellow-worshippers of Saints and Angels for ever and ever in heaven.

XI. Let us pass to another point. It is observed in the Volume before us, that few of a large, intelligent, and active class of our population—our mechanics and artisans—are to be seen in religious congregations in our great towns on the Lord's Day<sup>6</sup>. And one of the

<sup>6</sup> " More especially in cities and large towns it is observable how *absolutely insignificant* a portion of the congregations is composed of artisans. They fill, perhaps, in youth, our *National, British, and Sunday Schools*, and there receive the elements of a religious education ; but, no sooner do they mingle in the active world of labour than, subjected to the constant action of opposing influences, they soon become as utter strangers to religious ordinances as the people of a heathen country. From whatever cause, in them or in the manner of their treatment by religious bodies, it is sadly certain that this vast, intelligent, and growingly important section of our countrymen is thoroughly estranged from our religious institutions in their present aspect. Probably, indeed, the prevalence of *infidelity* has been exaggerated, if the word be taken in its popular meaning, as implying some degree of intellectual effort and decision ; but, no doubt, a great extent of negative, inert indifference prevails, the practical effects of which are much the same. There is a sect, originated recently, adherents to a system called *Secularism* ; the principal tenet being that, as the fact of a future life is (in their view) at all events susceptible of *some* degree of doubt, while the fact and the necessities of a present life are matters of direct sensation, it is therefore prudent to attend exclusively to the concerns of that existence which is certain and immediate—not wasting energies required for present duties by a preparation for remote, and merely possible, contingencies. This is the creed which probably with most exactness indicates the faith which, virtually though not professedly, is entertained by the masses of our working population ; by the skilled and unskilled labourer alike—by hosts of minor shopkeepers and Sunday traders—and by miserable denizens of courts and crowded alleys. They are *unconscious Secularists*—engrossed by the demands, the trials, or the pleasures of the passing hour, and ignorant or careless of a future. These are *never or but seldom seen in our religious congregations* ; and the melancholy fact is thus impressed upon our notice that the classes which are most in need

principal dangers and difficulties of our times is to be found in the present unprecedented diffusion of some kinds of Cheap Literature, often of a very noxious character, and forming too frequently the intellectual food of that large and important class of our population, especially on the Lord's Day.

What a change has taken place in this respect since the time of St. John! Then works of literature struggled forth with difficulty by means of the tedious process of manual transcription. Probably we should not exceed the truth if we were to say that more copies of books are produced in this city in a single day than were then issued in the world in a century. How few then were the writers, how few the readers, especially in that class to which we refer! A revolution has been wrought by the Press. It may be a revolution for good, it may be a revolution for evil.

Blessed be God's Holy Name for the facilities which He has given us by the Invention of Printing, for the dissemination of His Holy Word in all parts of the earth, and for the fulfilment of Christ's prophecy, *This Gospel must first be preached to all nations, and then shall the end come*<sup>7</sup>.

But what an Apostle says of the Tongue, may be said of the Press, which is the Tongue of the World. *Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be*<sup>8</sup>. The Tongue, when animated by God, is *the best member that we have*. It is like a heavenly harp in an Angel's hand. But "corruptio optimi fit pessima," and when

of the restraints and consolations of religion are the classes which are most without them."—Religious Census Report, p. clviii. The remarks on this point are very important.

<sup>7</sup> Matt. xxiv. 14. Mark xiii. 10.

<sup>8</sup> James iii. 9, 10.

stimulated by the Evil One it becomes the worst. *The Tongue is a Fire*, says the Apostle, *a World of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell* <sup>9</sup>.

So it is with the Tongue of the World, the Press. It is either one of our best members, or our worst. And, alas! we have too good reason to know from authoritative evidence, that in the present times and in our own cities, and particularly on the Lord's Day, the words of the Apostle, concerning the abuse of the Tongue, are too often applicable to that of the Press. The total annual issue of immoral publications, and their principal issue is on Sunday, has been publicly stated at twenty-nine Millions, being much more than all the issues of all our Religious Societies <sup>1</sup>; and in them the most heinous crimes are represented, not only as venial, but even as worthy of admiration <sup>2</sup>. I forbear to wound your ears with further details. But here is a special peril of our own age in our populous Cities.

Lift up your thoughts to heaven. Think of its inhabitants. The eyes of all look to the Throne of God. The tongues of all are employed in praising Him. Then revert to earth. Reflect on the thousands

<sup>9</sup> James iii. 6.

<sup>1</sup> A question may naturally occur to the reader whether an antidote for the evil might not be provided by these Societies, particularly by the Venerable Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. On this point a Letter is subjoined at the close of the present Discourse. It was not written for publication, but may perhaps suggest matter for consideration.

<sup>2</sup> See the details given in the Parliamentary Report on Newspaper Stamps (July 18, 1851), particularly pages 205, 206, and in two recent pamphlets on the "Penny Periodical Press" (Wooldridge, Paternoster Row), by a person whose zealous and disinterested efforts are entitled to high commendation.

and tens of thousands around us, whose eyes and tongues are now engaged in reading what has been described. How can they be rescued from the grasp of the Evil one to the service and worship of God? *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*

XII. And here we are led to observe on the present prevalence of a disposition to overrate the benefits derivable from *School Teaching*, considered simply as such.

A School Building is erected ; three or four hundred Children are collected in it from our streets and alleys ; they are taught to read and writc ; to become proficient in Scripture History, and Secular Knowledge ; and it appears to be imagined by some that a great work of social Regeneration has been achieved, and that the population of our Cities may be made moral and religious by these means. Unhappy delusion ! Knowledge is of little use without Grace ; it may be worse than useless, it may become dangerous to him who has it, and to Society at large. Many who have learnt to read the Bible as children in our Schools now cavil at the Bible as men in our Streets<sup>3</sup>. Children are taught to read with fluency, and thus they acquire a precious gift, which if used aright will be full of blessing. But unless while at School they are brought under the Teaching of the Holy Ghost to renew them in *the spirit of their minds*, unless they are taught to *pray* as well as to *read* ; unless they are taught to seek for the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, and to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, Love, Meekness, Gentleness, by the right use of the means of Grace in public prayer in the Lord's House on the Lord's Day ; and by the parental guidance and loving counsel of Christ's Ministers,—unless, in a word, the School is brought under

<sup>3</sup> See Note above, p. 41, from the Census Report.

the wing of the Church and under the Benediction of Christ, then its labours are worse than vain ; the Children taught within its walls not having had their wills controlled, their tempers chastened, their understandings enlightened, their hearts purified by the heavenly influences of the Holy Spirit, and not being trained in religious habits, will become the victims of their own unsanctified passions and unbridled appetites, a prey to the vicious impulses of their own corrupt nature, and to the manifold temptations of the world, the flesh, and the Devil, which beset them in our large Cities. And then, the intellectual powers acquired at School will render them more energetic for evil, more ready for deeds of darkness ; more terrible weapons in the hand of the Tempter. Their fluency in reading will facilitate the indulgence of a diseased appetite by the perusal of vicious publications ; their proficiency in writing and their readiness of speech, will enable them to pamper the bad passions of others with the same literary food as that which has poisoned themselves ; and thus our very Schools may be Seminaries of Sedition, and nurseries of Infidelity and Vice.

XIII. One more topic here.

Large bodies of men—of active intelligent men, full of vigour in body and mind, endowed with mechanical skill and great material power, our Operatives and Artisans,—are collected together in vast masses and combinations in our large cities. They form as it were Classes and Castes ; and these have outgrown the range of our Parochial System and pastoral ministrations, and are almost estranged from them. When we consider the intelligence of this class, as well as its magnitude and power for good and evil ; when we reflect that—as is observed in the Volume to which I refer—they are in a great measure withdrawn from the reach of those sacred and spiritual influences,



which alone can restrain the passions, and produce contentment and love; and when we remember that the possession and consciousness of power, in such cases as these, tempt and lead to its abuse, and when we know that the bonds which ought to unite the labourer and his employer are weakened; and that many of our Factories were recently silent and closed, and that thousands of our Operatives stood aloof from their work in dark distrust and gloomy discontent, we cannot but feel apprehensions for our temporal and spiritual state.

What would be here the language of the Apostle St. Paul? He had before him a not very different picture; he saw vast bodies of men collected together in workshops, and quarries, and mines; and these were in a worse condition than any class among ourselves. They were Slaves. And how did he deal with them? His Epistle to Philemon supplies the answer. And if more is required, let us turn our eyes to those beautiful precepts of Apostolic Teaching in the Epistles to the Ephesians<sup>4</sup>, to the Colossians<sup>5</sup>, to Titus<sup>6</sup>, and to Timothy<sup>7</sup>, in which he lays down the reciprocal rights and duties of Employers and Employed, of Masters and Servants, and teaches them to regard one another as fellow-members in Christ, and as brethren of the same family, cemented together by His blood, and charges them to edify one another, and to promote one another's welfare in body and estate, and especially in the concerns of their souls and of Eternity.

Have these precepts been duly regarded by us? Has this Christian Fellowship, this Spiritual Brotherhood, been rightly remembered and revered? With some splendid exceptions (and one is well known to

<sup>4</sup> Chap. vi. 5.

<sup>5</sup> Chap. iii. 22; iv. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Chap. ii. 9.

<sup>7</sup> 1 Tim. vi. 1.

you as existing in this neighbourhood<sup>8</sup>) it must, I fear, be confessed that the precepts of the Apostle have been too little heeded. Our mechanics have been too often treated as little better than machines; and not as immortal Beings redeemed by the Blood of Christ, and as our fellow-members in Him.

XIV. Thus then you see, my brethren, we have before us a large catalogue of evils. Five millions of persons absent from religious assemblies on the Lord's Day. A vast aggregate, therefore, of practical Infidelity, of flagrant Ungodliness, and all their consequent miseries, personal, domestic, social, temporal, and eternal. A vast catalogue also of religious divisions, and all their unhappy results.

But let them be gathered together as members of one family for common prayer and praise, and particularly for Public Worship on the Lord's Day, then how blessed would be the result!

We have, indeed, a specious shew of Religious Worship in appearance, but when it comes to be tested by the rule of the precept and practice of Christ and His Apostles, and by reference to what we know of Religious Worship in Heaven, how little of it can bear the scrutiny, how little of it can be called "Religious Worship" in reality! We have a large display of religious Lectures, and religious Lecture-rooms, which

<sup>8</sup> The Belmont Factory, Vauxhall, of Price's Candle Company, under the paternal care of Messrs. Wilson; where means of Public Worship are provided, connected with the Factory. The results of this system, it is hardly necessary to add, have been and are most satisfactory. The similar efforts of Messrs. Eyre and W. and G. A. Spottiswoode are also entitled to grateful commemoration. And I cannot but refer with pleasure to the zealous and intelligent endeavours, in the cause of Church Extension, that have been, and are now, made by the head of that respectable house in which these Discourses are printed. Other instances might be cited.

may provide gratification for the cravings of the ear on the Lord's Day, but let us not mistake them for sure indications of Religion in the heart, nor regard them as supplying any adequate means for growth in Grace and in the Love of God. They may delude us by a Show of Religion without the substance—an exuberance of leaves and flowers without the fruit; they may tempt us to substitute religious emotion and religious excitement for religious principle, religious practice, and religious adoration. They may engender spiritual pride, and inflate us with an overweening confidence that we are *rich in spiritual gifts, and have need of nothing*, like the Church of Laodicea<sup>9</sup>, while at the same time God may know that we are *wretched and miserable, and poor and blind*. We may be fascinated by a dazzling display of popular intelligence; but let us remember that the Holy Spirit pronounced of old concerning a great nation in the zenith of its glory, *Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee*<sup>1</sup>. And if we abuse God's Gifts of Reason, Intellect, and Speech, then His blessings will become our Bane, our glory will be our shame, and *professing ourselves wise we shall become Fools*<sup>2</sup>.

We have a vast array of Schools, and if the children within them are taught of God, then blessed will they be; but if the Holy Spirit of God is not their Teacher, if their knowledge is not sanctified by Divine Grace, given through the appointed means of Grace, in united Prayer and Praise, in the Apostolic rite of Confirmation, and in the Holy Sacraments of Christ, duly administered and rightly received, then our Schools will be little better than Babels, melancholy monuments of our own pride, and presumption; and confusion and distraction will be their result.

We have a vast apparatus of mechanical power; our

<sup>9</sup> Rev. iii. 18.

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xlvi. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. i. 22.

Manufactures and our Commerce exhibit a splendid spectacle ; but unless they are consecrated to God, unless they are blessed by Him, unless the vast multitudes of human souls congregated by them are united by Christian ties, animated by Christian hopes, sanctified by Christian graces, and trained in Christian habits, especially by Religious Worship, then what should be our strength, and what might be our joy, may become a source of weakness, an occasion of shame ; the instruments of our national prowess and the trophies of our national glory may be used by the Hand of a Righteous God as means of retribution upon us.

XV. What then is our remedy ?

In all our reasonings concerning spiritual things, let us *remember the end, and we shall never do amiss*<sup>3</sup>. Let us look up to heaven and meditate on the future life of its inhabitants as revealed to us in this day's Scripture, *They rest not day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty*. The heavenly Sabbath will be consecrated to the worship of the Triune God. It will be an Eternal Trinity Sunday. There is our End, there our Rule of Life. Let our thoughts and words and works be moulded accordingly. Here also is our Divine Standard for Religious Restoration. Here is the pole-star to guide us in our course. Let us fix our eyes upon it, and let all our designs be referred to it. Let us labour and pray that Earth may be a school for Heaven. Let us meditate on the myriads in heaven bending before the throne of the Triune God and singing praises to Him ; and then let us reflect on the multitudes of immortal beings around us upon earth, worshipping their own devices, and offending the Triune God by violation of His Will and Word, and

<sup>3</sup> Ecclus. vii. 36.

profanation of His Name on His Sacred Day. What a jarring Discord between those heavenly myriads and these earthly multitudes! How can they be brought into tune? Here is a work for the love of Angels, who rejoice at the conversion of a single sinner<sup>4</sup>, to recover these wandering Crowds to the hope of a better inheritance, and to reconcile Earth and heaven.

We look up to heaven; we behold its inhabitants engaged in *Adoration*. This is "Religious Worship." Not the gazing of the eye, not the gratification of the ear, but the service of the lips and of the heart, Worship, Prayer, and Praise. Here is our best instrument in Religious Restoration.

We look up to heaven; its Adoration will be Adoration of the *Triune God*: and this will be unceasing; there will be *no other* worship. They rest not day and night, saying, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty*. There will be *no* worship of the *Creature*; and therefore the adoration of any *created* beings, however holy, such as Angels, or the Blessed Virgin, or of Saints, is *no* preparation for heaven, it is no fit instrument in Religious Restoration.

We look up to heaven; its adoration we see will be *united* adoration. It will have one song of praise chanted by all; *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty*. There will be no variance, no discord, no religious divisions. Strifes and schisms are as unlike Heaven as an angry Ocean swept by a hurricane is unlike the clear calm *crystal sea before the throne of God*<sup>5</sup>. Therefore religious divisions are no preparation for heaven, no fit instrument in Religious Restoration.

Let us then endeavour to keep *the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*, that *we may with one mind and one mouth glorify God*<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Luke xv. 7, 10.

<sup>5</sup> Rev. iv. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Eph. iv. 3. Rom. xv. 6.

We look up to heaven ; its life we see is Adoration : we may be sure therefore that *Knowledge* alone, even *religious Knowledge*, will not bring us to heaven. It may exclude us from it. For *Knowledge puffeth up*<sup>7</sup>. It may beguile us to worship *ourselves* instead of adoring God. Knowledge without love,—Knowledge without adoration—this is the miserable portion of the *fallen Angels* : it can never bring us to the company of the *Elect Angels* in heaven.

Schools therefore without Churches are *wells without water*<sup>3</sup>. Schools without Sacraments, Schools without Prayer, united prayer and praise, and the other means of Grace given by the Holy Spirit through the Ministry of His Church, are no seminaries for heaven ; they are no fit instruments in the work of Religious Restoration.

Let us now approach the Table of the Lord, and kneel before the Triune God, and lift up our hearts to heaven, and receive the bread of life, the heavenly manna of our souls, and have a pledge and foretaste of heavenly joys, and look up with the eye of Faith to the Throne of God, and to those pure Angelic Spirits who are kneeling before it ; let us pray that our life on earth may be like their life in heaven, and let us seek for grace to worship God with their fervour, alacrity, and love, so that hereafter we may join with them, and with the spirits of just men made perfect, who will *rest not day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was and is, and is to come. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power, for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.*

<sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. viii. 1.

<sup>8</sup> 2 Pct. ii. 17.

## NOTE to p. 46.

“ *To the Rev. the Secretary of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, Lincoln’s Inn Fields.*

“ Cloisters, Westminster Abbey.  
Feb. 27, 1854.

“ MY DEAR SIR,

“ Let me thank you for your kindness in informing me of the hour appointed by the Committee for receiving the Deputation from the Meeting held at Archbishop Tenison’s Library on Feb. 6th.

“ Although it is my hope to attend at the time mentioned in your letter, yet it may not be amiss, for the sake of clearness and conciseness, that I should endeavour to specify in writing some of the points which seem to deserve consideration in reference to the subject upon which the Deputation has been instructed to request a Conference with the Standing Committee.

“ According to the existing practice of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, *no Tract*, I believe, can obtain a place on the *Permanent Catalogue* of the Society, unless the author of the Tract complies with two conditions :—

“ 1. To surrender his right of authorship or copyright.

“ 2. To offer it for the approval and revision of the Tract Committee, consisting of seven members of the Society, appointed annually for that purpose.

“ These regulations, I apprehend, form no part of the Society’s original constitution, but are of comparatively recent date.

“ In former times the Society was enabled to avail itself of all the best Tracts of the day, and to place them on its *Permanent Catalogue*, without requiring any such surrender of copyright as it now exacts, and which many authors would be reluctant to make; and thus it appears to have incapacitated itself in some measure for discharging the principal function of a ‘ Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge,’ namely, that of adopting and absorbing into itself the most valuable Tracts for the times, and of lending the powerful aid of its machinery for diffusing the good derivable from them.

“ Thus also, as it appears, it has imposed a disability and penalty on the Clergy and Laity who subscribe to the Society, inasmuch as it has deprived them of a benefit which they formerly enjoyed, and

which they might have enjoyed still more largely, that of receiving through the medium of the Society many excellent Tracts of which the Society did not possess the copyright, and which it would never have been able to circulate if it had required that possession.

“ On the other hand, it cannot be denied that some benefits may have arisen from the adoption of the regulations in question. The Society, by its Tract Committee, revises and approves all the Tracts, now, I believe, more than nine hundred in number, on its ‘Permanent Catalogue.’ Possessing the copyright of these Tracts it has full control over them. It gives them its *Imprimatur*, and persons desirous of circulating Tracts of a safe and sober tone may resort without apprehension to those supplied by the Society.

“ Still, even here, some doubts may arise whether these regulations should be maintained in their present state, and whether, if they are to be maintained, it may not be desirable to add some other machinery by which greater expansion and energy may be imparted to the Society.

“ The Society is supposed to authorize the Tracts on its ‘Permanent Catalogue,’ and to be responsible for them, and no Tract is admitted into that Catalogue without having passed under the review, and having obtained the sanction, of the Tract Committee, the members of which may vary from year to year.

“ Tracts produced and published under such conditions as these may, it is probable, be of a sound and salutary character, as far as freedom from error is concerned ; but it is also probable that some of them may bear marks of reserve and restraint, and perhaps even of compromise with regard to the declaration of Truth, and that some of them may be of a neutral and insipid kind, and that they will not, for the most part, be distinguished by that life and vigour, and clearness of argument and expression, which is likely to tell most powerfully on the minds of the lower classes, and is absolutely necessary for the production of an effective antidote to those seductive, pungent, and poisonous publications now circulated among us, especially in our large cities and manufacturing districts, with such alarming success.

“ In the event of the Society declining to take this matter into its consideration, and to make provisions accordingly, it is much to be feared that some rival Society may be formed for the performance of this work which ‘the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge’ is specially qualified to execute ; and that thus a fresh occasion of division and distraction may arise. Indeed there are more than sufficient evidences to shew that such a result is more than probable at present.



“On the whole, then, let me be permitted to suggest for consideration whether it might not be desirable,—

“1. That the Society should return to its ancient practice of adopting Tracts without requiring a surrender of Copyright.

“2. That these Tracts, so adopted, should be placed on a separate Catalogue.

“3. That in order that a Tract should be admitted into this separate Catalogue, it should suffice that there was a considerable demand for the Tract in question among the Clergy and Laity, Members of the Society, signified by a certain number of its District Committees<sup>1</sup>, and that this intimation from the District Committees were countersigned by the Archdeacon and Bishop of the Diocese.

“4. That it should be distinctly expressed and understood that the Society did not hold itself responsible for the Tracts in question, and that it only guaranteed the *fact* that there was a considerable demand of a respectable character for them.

“5. That a statement to this effect should be prefixed to the separate Catalogue, which might follow after the Supplemental Catalogue in the Society's Reports, and be called the *Third Catalogue* of the Society's Tracts.

“By the adoption of some such measures as these, it is very respectfully submitted the Society would be returning to ancient practice; it would be enabled to adopt the best current Tract Literature of the Church; it would lend the aid of its powerful machinery for the circulation of that Literature, and thus increase its own means of usefulness, and confer additional benefits on its Subscribers and on Society at large: it would enable the Clergy to see in one Report, and at one Depository, all the best Tracts of the day; it would remove an occasion of offence, and avert the danger of a Schism; and it would do this without making any change in the Constitution of its existing Committees, or the framework of its present Catalogues, and without incurring any risk or responsibility.

“I have the honour to be, my dear Sir,

“Yours very faithfully, &c. &c.,

“ —————.”

<sup>1</sup> Of which there are about 376.



## SERMON XXXVI.

THE EPISCOPATE.

REV. i. 20.

*“The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches.”*

SUCH is the language of the Divine Head of the Church concerning the Bishops of Asia addressed by Him in the Apocalypse. They are called Stars, Lights in the firmament of the Church, Stars in Christ's right hand; and they are also termed Angels, His Messengers, sent to declare His Will, and to minister His Grace to men.

I. This declaration from the mouth of Christ proclaims His Divine counsel concerning the regimen of the Church. It appears to be conclusive in favour of Episcopacy. *The Seven Stars are the Angels of the Churches*; and those Angels were the Chief Pastors, or in other words (as all Christian Antiquity witnesses), they were the Bishops of those Churches<sup>1</sup>. The Holy Spirit here recognizes them as the Representatives of those Churches. He addresses them as such, He acknowledges their Commission, and thus He pro-

<sup>1</sup> S. August. Ep. cxlii. : “Sub *Angeli* nomine divina voce laudatur *præpositus Ecclesiæ* ;” and S. Ambrose in 1 Cor. xi. : “*Angelos Episcopos* dicit ;” cf. S. Jerome in 1 Cor. xi. See also Hooker, vii. v. 2 ; Abp. Bramhall, Works, ii. 69 ; iii. 470.

nounces a Divine sentence in favour of Ecclesiastical Government by Bishops<sup>2</sup>.

II. Next, these words supply a similar testimony in behalf of *Diocesan* Episcopacy; they intimate the will of Christ that the Divine *Field* of His Church, *which is the World*<sup>3</sup>, should be portioned into allotments, and that each allotment should be committed to the superintendence of one person, who should have chief authority in that part of the Lord's Heritage.

III. Let us observe also the limits of the region in which these Seven Angels exercised Episcopal Jurisdiction. *The Seven Stars* were the *Angels of the Seven Churches* to which St. John wrote. This hierarchical Pleiad was one of many Constellations, and occupied but a small space in the spiritual heaven of the Church. All these seven Stars were fixed in the region of Proconsular Asia, a territory not much larger than one of our own Counties<sup>4</sup>. And in addition to these Stars, which were of greater magnitude and are supposed to

<sup>2</sup> See Bp. Bilson's *Perpetual Government of Christ's Church*, chap. xiv. (p. 375, ed. Oxf. 1842.)

It is well observed by Saravia (the friend of Hooker), *De Div. Grad. Ministr.* p. 29: "Ex verbo Dei manifestum est ætate Ioannis Apostoli septem Asiæ Ecclesias septem habuisse Episcopos divina ordinatione sibi præfectos. Cum enim Spiritus Sanctus illic nihil dissimulet eorum quæ peccârant aut Angeli ipsi, aut qui sub eorum regimine constituti, ambitiosam (quæ multis videtur) innovationem recens in Ecclesiam invectam contra Domini institutionem sine reprehensione nunquam præteriisset. Etenim illæ Ecclesiæ plures habuerunt Presbyteros: non tamen pluribus Presbyteris vitio vertitur quod in Ecclesiis peccabatur, sed singulos singularum Ecclesiarum Angelos alloquitur."

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xiii. 38.

<sup>4</sup> Called Lydia or Proconsular Asia. But Asia Minor, properly so called, *i. e.* from the Hellespont to the Euphrates, and containing about 630 miles by 210, had, not long after, about four hundred Episcopal sees. See the notitia in Bingham, and *ibid.* ix. chap. 2.

In Palæstine, where Christianity was first planted, there were nearly fifty dioceses. Bingham, ix. chap. 2.

have enjoyed a Metropolitan dignity, there were some lesser stars interspersed, which, having Episcopal rank, might also be called Angels; such were the Bishops of Magnesia, Tralles, and Hierapolis<sup>5</sup>.

Thus then, in this brief sentence, we have a signification of Christ's will concerning the government of His Church :

1st. That it should be *Episcopal* ;

2ndly. That it should be *Diocesan* ; and

3rdly. We have some intimation with regard to the *extent* of Dioceses within which the authority of each Bishop was exercised.

This picture of Ecclesiastical Polity is drawn by the hand of the Holy Spirit of God, and is presented to us in Holy Writ for our contemplation and instruction. It is an Apostolic Model of Church Government. And if we descend to the next age after the Apostles, and trace the results of this system, we find that they correspond to the origin from which they were derived. How beautiful is the view there opened to our sight !

<sup>5</sup> See the particulars in Bingham, ix. chap. 3, § 9, and Abp. Ussher's *Original of Bishops* (Ed. Oxon. 1641, p. 67), who says,

“That in *Laodicea, Sardis, Smyrna, Ephesus, and Pergamus*, the Roman Governors held their *Courts of Justice*, to which all the cities and towns about had recourse for the ending of their suites, is observed out of *Pliny*. In *Ptolemy*, likewise, *Thyatira* is expressly named a *Metropolis* ; as *Philadelphia* also is, in the Greek Acts of the Council of *Constantinople* held under *Menna*, which giveth us good ground to conceive that the *seven* cities, in which these *seven* Churches had their seat, were all of them *Metropolitically*, and so had relation unto the rest of the townes and cities of *Asia*, as unto *Daughters* rising under them.

“The *Lydian Asia* was separated from *Caria* by the river *Mæander* : upon the banks whereof were seated both *Tralles* and *Magnesia*, which in the civil list of the empire are placed under the peculiar regiment of the *Proconsul of Asia*, and in the Ecclesiastical register under the government of the *Metropolitan of Ephesus*.”

We see a succession of holy Bishops proceeding from this region of Lesser Asia to evangelize the world. Some, like Polycarp and Ignatius, rejoiced with youthful exultation in old age to shed their blood for Christ. Some went forth, like Irenæus, to the West, to plant the truth and uproot heresy. Some proclaimed the Gospel in all the regions of Asia; such as the Gregorys, Basils, and Chrysostoms, and achieved peaceful conquests in the luxurious cities of the East, and made them pass in willing obedience beneath the yoke of Christ.

It is not unworthy of remark that the most triumphant assertions of the great verities of the Catholic Faith, deduced from Holy Scripture, concerning the two Natures and Personality of Christ, and the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, and the Mystery of the Trinity in Unity, were the genuine growth of this region and of this holy discipline. To it the Church Universal owes the Creed of Nicæa and Constantinople, to it she is indebted for the glorious truths proclaimed in the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon; and we, who dwell in the extreme West, and who once sat in the darkness of heathenism, received thence the first beams of the Gospel. We were illumined by a heavenly light, shed from the Stars of Asia, shining in the Hand of Christ <sup>6</sup>.

We find also that this system of Diocesan Episcopacy was extended in early times throughout the world. Bishops were placed in populous cities. These Episcopal Sees were the Missionary Stations of the Church. Whenever a city increased in population it

<sup>6</sup> See Sir R. Twysden's *Vindication of the Church of England*, p. 7. Our word 'Church,' from *Κυριακή*, seems to intimate that our Christianity is not of Latin origin. Beveridge in Canon XV. Conc. Ancyr., and on Article XIX.

became the See of a Bishop. Thus the world was evangelized<sup>7</sup>.

Let us apply these facts to ourselves.

IV. We have Episcopal Government, we possess Diocesan Episcopacy; thanks be to Almighty God for these benefits; and yet we have much to deplore in our present spiritual condition, especially in our large cities; and we find it asserted, that as much as almost a third of our population take no part in the public worship of God on the Lord's Day<sup>8</sup>.

This is a state of things which may well fill us with alarm.

How is it to be explained? to what is it to be ascribed? how is it to be amended?

We have various replies to these questions. Some would impute it solely to the lack of Churches and

<sup>7</sup> See Concil. Sardic. can. 6, and Leo Epist. 87, c. 2, whence it appears that in large cities Bishops were placed; and when a town grew in magnitude, it became an Episcopal See. Conc. Carthag. ii. c. 6, provides that Episcopal sees should be multiplied according to the increase of the Population. "S. Gregory Nazianzen highly commends S. Basil's piety and practice" for increasing the number of Bishoprics in his Province. S. Greg. Naz. Orat. de laud. Basil. i. p. 356; Bingham, ii. ch. 12. St. Augustine, not being able to discharge his Episcopal duties at a place forty miles from Hippo, had a Bishop consecrated for it. The language of the Canon Law may be seen Decret. 2 Pars can. 16, qu. 1. 53: "Ubi multitudo fidelium excrevit, ibi Episcopi sunt ordinandi."

This was the Missionary principle of the ancient Church.

<sup>8</sup> And this absence is not to be ascribed solely or mainly to the want of *Church room*. "It is tolerably certain that the 5,288,294 who every Sunday neglect religious ordinances do so of their own free choice, and are not compelled to be absent on account of a deficiency of sittings."—(Religious Census Report, p. 154.) This assertion must be qualified before it is applied to many populous districts. But the inference derived from it is true—that we need *first of all* and most of all, the *living Church*, the Apostolic foundation stones—the Episcopate.

Clergy, and would remove the evil by supplying these defects. Others would seek a remedy in the use of Lay agency for the dissemination of Scriptural Truth. Others, in shortening our Church Services. But all appear to be agreed that large masses of our population in our great towns are almost in a heathen state; that the work of Christianization must be commenced in them, they must be dealt with almost as the gentile cities of Ephesus, and Smyrna, and Thyatira, were treated by Apostles and Apostolic men in the first ages of Christianity.

And here, perhaps, we may find an answer to the question before us. Our Lord began the work of propagating the Gospel by sending forth His Apostles, *Go ye into all the world<sup>9</sup> and teach all Nations<sup>1</sup>*. And the Apostles appointed others, whom they placed as Bishops in large cities, with a command that they should commit the sacred deposit of Evangelical Truth *to faithful men who should be able to teach others also<sup>2</sup>*. Accordingly, as we have already seen in the Apocalypse, we find that in the age of St. John the Episcopal Office was duly constituted and exercised in the cities of Asia.

What do we thence learn? That the first Missionaries were Bishops. This was the primary step of Church-progress; to establish the Episcopate<sup>3</sup>. The rest would follow in due course. Presbyters and Deacons would be ordained; children would be baptized, catechized, and confirmed; Churches and Schools would be built. And thus the Church would be organized and developed in full and vigorous expansion, and the whole body would be animated with spiritual life, and adorned with spiritual beauty, by

<sup>9</sup> Matt. xxviii. 19.

<sup>1</sup> Mark xvi. 15.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Tim. ii. 2.

<sup>3</sup> See this fully proved by Bp. Bilson, *Perpetual Government of Christ's Church*, chap. xiv.



the indwelling of the Holy Ghost and the Divine Presence of Christ.

V. But, my beloved Brethren, have *we* imitated this sacred example? Have *we* followed the steps of Christ in propagating Christianity? Are we now following them in our endeavours to reclaim our populous cities to the knowledge and obedience of His Truth?

We hear something, heaven be thanked, of the building of new Churches and Schools; we hear something of additional Clergy<sup>4</sup>; we hear something of Scripture-readers and City-missionaries. But what do we hear of the main thing? What do we hear of the fundamental principle—the first step of all—as Christ's example shews, and as Apostolic practice declares? What do we hear of that without which Schools and Churches and Clergy are mere dislocated fragments and scattered atoms? What have we yet heard of any adequate effort to extend and consolidate the Apostolic Office of Bishops, for the exercise of Missionary functions in our semi-pagan cities? What have we heard of any well-considered design for combining in Centres of Unity the distracted forces of the Church, and for dispensing freely and fully through the whole frame of the Nation, those spiritual blessings which the Great Head of the Church vouchsafes to bestow by the divinely-appointed instrumentality of the Episcopate<sup>5</sup>?

<sup>4</sup> But is it not like a reckless sacrifice of human life,—and like a tempting of Divine Providence,—to place a Clergyman here and there in a large town, isolated, single-handed in districts of eight or ten thousand souls, without any Episcopal centre or rallying point for counsel, comfort, support, union, and strength?

<sup>5</sup> As was observed above, p. 63, *note*, it would appear that the *non-attendance* of nearly a third of our population at any religious worship on the Lord's Day is not ascribable mainly to *deficiency* of Churches and Chapels. (See Census Report, p. 154.) For, although

*The Seven Stars are the Angels of the Seven Churches.* So spake Christ Himself, pointing to the Bishops of Asia. There, as we have seen, in the days of St. John, each principal city had its Bishop seated in his Apostolic Chair; and this was the method which the Holy Spirit appointed for evangelizing those cities<sup>6</sup>. And we know how glorious were the results.

VI. But compare England with Asia. How striking is the difference! We have Episcopacy, we have Diocesan Episcopacy. So far we are alike. But in its application, how great is the contrast! Many of the Dioceses in England, taken singly<sup>7</sup>, occupy more space and contain more souls than all the seven Dioceses that were committed to the charge of Timothy, and Polycarp, and Ignatius, and other Apostolic men by the Apostles St. Paul and St. John<sup>8</sup>.

This remarkable contrast will excite serious reflections in the minds of those who venerate the example of the primitive Church as presented to us in Holy Scripture, and who look on our own present distress with sorrow and fear.

VII. Let us also compare our present state in regard to Episcopal efficiency with our condition in former times.

a thousand additional Churches and Chapels are necessary to accommodate the population, yet, in very many places, the Churches and Chapels are not filled on the Lord's Day (p. 155).

The Report justly observes (p. 161): "Teeming populations often now surround half-empty Churches." "The grand requirement of the case is a multiplication of the various *agents* by whose zeal religion is disseminated; *not chiefly* an additional provision of *religious edifices*."

<sup>6</sup> Thomassini de Eccles. Discip. Pars 1, lib. 1, cap. ii. 8.

<sup>7</sup> See Note A at end.

<sup>8</sup> So also in the West. Even the great Episcopal see of Rome appears to have not had more than forty-six presbyters committed to the oversight of the Bishop in the third century. See Euseb. H. E. vi. 43. Cp. Optat. ii. 4.

At the period of the Reformation, three centuries ago, some additions were made to the Episcopate by the advice of holy men whom Almighty God raised up to perform the work of religious Restoration<sup>9</sup>. A further augmentation was then designed, but was not carried into effect. And now that three hundred years have elapsed since the Reformation, scarcely any further addition has been made to the English Episcopate. It would seem as if we had little value for Episcopacy and for the blessings conveyed by it. Indeed, in some respects its numbers have been diminished, by the discontinuance of Suffragans<sup>1</sup>. The Church of England is straining herself in a painful struggle to do her work in the nineteenth century, by means of a machinery which was judged inadequate even for the sixteenth century. The number of souls now contained in three of her Dioceses is more than equal to the souls contained in all her Dioceses at the Reformation; and yet hardly any addition has been made to her Episcopate since that time<sup>2</sup>.

Need we be surprised that the spiritual condition of our large cities is what it is? Rather, we might be

<sup>9</sup> See Note B at end.

<sup>1</sup> The inconveniences from the employment of such Bishops as were called "Suffragans" by 26 Hen. VIII. c. 14, led to their discontinuance; and the following statement deserves respectful attention: "I have conversed with several of my Brethren respecting the revival of Suffragan Bishops, but have not met with one who did not strongly deprecate the measure."—Letter on the Recommendations of the Ecclesiastical Commission. By John, Bp. of Lincoln. London 1838, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Milner observes (Church History, Third Century, chap. xx.): "It is certain that in the third century Dioceses were much smaller than in after times. And the vast extension of them proved very inconvenient to the cause of godliness. Archbishop Cranmer wished to correct this evil in our national Church, and he wanted neither zeal nor judgment. But that and many other good things slept with the English Reformers."

astonished if it were otherwise. For we have neglected to apply the agency which Christ Himself has appointed for our edification, and which our forefathers were enabled to preserve and exhorted us to extend.

We have not planted the tree, and how can we look for the fruit? We may not expect the stream, for we have not opened the source.

In pointing out some of the evils arising from this inadequacy, we shall not be suspected of imputing any of them to those right reverend persons, to whom as our Spiritual Fathers we owe more than filial reverence. Rather, we shall be performing an act of dutiful obedience, by endeavouring to further their wishes, recently expressed, on a public occasion, in conjunction with the Clergy in Convocation assembled in this province, for an extension of the Episcopate<sup>3</sup>. And it is a gratifying circumstance, my brethren, that these words are now uttered in the presence of one of that right reverend body, who, more than fifteen years ago, in a Charge delivered to his Clergy, expressed his regret for this inadequacy, and his desire for an increase in the Episcopate<sup>4</sup>.

VIII. The necessity of such extension is shewn by other considerations.

The *Presbyters* of the Church are Pastors of their respective Congregations. But a *Bishop* is a Pastor of Pastors, a Teacher of Teachers, a Guide of Guides. How many qualifications therefore are requisite for that high and holy office! *The Priest's lips should keep*

<sup>3</sup> Address of the Bishops and Clergy of the Province of Canterbury to Her Most Gracious Majesty in the year 1852.

<sup>4</sup> Bp. of Gloucester and Bristol's Charge 1838, p. 9: "My own opinion was, and still is, that the simplest remedy for this acknowledged evil was likewise the most desirable: I mean a division of each of the large Dioceses of York, London, Lincoln, Chester, Exeter, and Lichfield, and the erection of the requisite number of additional Bishoprics."

knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts<sup>5</sup>. And if this is required of the Priest, surely it is of the Bishop. The Bishops of the Church have ever been regarded as chief Champions of the Faith,—as guardian Angels of the Church. *Let Thy Urim and Thy Thummim be with Thy Holy One*<sup>6</sup>. Even so, O Lord, let the Chief Pastors of Thy Spiritual Israel be clothed with perfectness and truth! The Apostles appointed Deacons that they might give themselves to *the ministry of the word and prayer*<sup>7</sup>. The inspired Apostle, St. Paul, notwithstanding his extraordinary graces, by which he excelled the rest<sup>8</sup>, did not think himself exempt from the duty of cultivating sacred learning. He sends for *his books and his parchments*<sup>9</sup>; and when

<sup>5</sup> Mal. ii. 7.<sup>6</sup> Deut. xxxiii. 8.<sup>7</sup> Acts vi. 4.<sup>8</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 18.<sup>9</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 13.

The following paragraphs from one of our most able Prelates may not be irrelevant here. Bp. BULL's Works, Ed. Oxon. 1827. Vol. i. p. 249. (Serm. X. Human means useful to inspired persons.)

“St. Paul had his books which he had read, and his manuscripts too, or collections of notes, which he found to be useful to him, and therefore gives Timothy a special charge to convey them safely to him.

“And it is further to be observed, that he earnestly exhorts his son Timothy to the same course of reading and study (1 Tim. iv. 13—15): *Till I come, give attendance to reading, &c.*: where we have several things observable to our purpose. 1. The exhortation is to Timothy, a man that was the beloved son, or darling scholar and disciple, of the great Apostle St. Paul; a man marked out long before by prophecies, as one that should prove a very eminent and excellent person, or by the spirit of prophecy in the Apostles, after a singular manner appointed to the ministry of the Gospel (1 Tim. i. 18), a man accordingly endowed with extraordinary and immediately infused abilities, signified by the *χάρισμα*, or *gift*, said here to be given him in his ordination. This man St. Paul exhorts to *reading and meditation, for the better discharge of his office*. 2. The order of the Apostle's exhortation to him is observable: *Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine*; to reading before exhortation or doctrine. He is advised to be himself first a well

he writes to his beloved son in the faith, Timothy, a person singularly endued with extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, and placed by him as Bishop at Ephesus, he lays upon him a solemn charge *to give attendance to reading*, and to *meditate* on those things that he read and learned, to *continue in them*, and to addict *himself wholly to them*, that his *profiting might appear unto all*<sup>1</sup>. And thus, by the Apostle's mouth, the Holy Spirit teaches the Church, that if she desires to be edified, ample time should be conceded to her Chief Pastors for retirement, study, prayer, and holy meditation, so that they may be able, by sound doctrine, wisdom, gravity, and power, to *exhort their hearers* and to *convince gainsayers*<sup>2</sup>. And if this be not the

read and learned divine, that he might be the better able to instruct and teach others. 3. The emphatical words used by the Apostle in the exhortation are remarkable. He adviseth Timothy not only to *read* and *study*, that he might be able to exhort and teach with profit, but presseth him to *give attendance* to reading, not to *neglect* the supernatural gift bestowed on him, to *meditate* on what he read and learned, and to addict and *give himself wholly* to these things. All which phrases plainly signify the greatest industry and diligence to be used by him in reading and study, and the other exercises there mentioned. The same thing doubtless St. Paul intends, when he admonisheth the same Timothy to *stir up the gift of God* within him (2 Tim. i. 6), where the Greek word is ἀναζωπυρεῖν, which properly signifies to *cherish* or *rekindle* fire (that will otherwise go out and die in its own ashes), by blowing it up and adding new fuel to it.

“Thus the gifts of God in men, even the extraordinary gifts, such as Timothy had, will soon decay, die, and be extinguished in the ashes, as it were, of their sloth and negligence, and require continual refreshment and reparation from their diligence in reading, studying, and praying.”

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. iv. 13—15.

<sup>2</sup> Titus i. 9.

On this subject see also the Latin Sermon of Dr. Launcelot (afterwards Bishop) Andrewes before the Bishops and Clergy of the Province of Canterbury, A.D. 1593, on Acts xx. 28.—Opuscula Posthuma, p. 29. Ed. Oxon. 1852.

case, then alas for the Church! If the salt should *lose its savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned*<sup>3</sup>? If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, *who shall prepare himself to the battle*<sup>4</sup>? Then will be a time of fear as *when a standardbearer fainteth*<sup>5</sup>. "The Teacher's error is the People's trial"<sup>6</sup>. *The Seven Stars are the Angels of the Churches*. But if any of the Stars give a feeble and wavering light, if any of them fall from their spheres, and become *wandering stars* and erratic meteors<sup>7</sup>, how shall the bewildered mariner steer his dubious course over the troubled waters of this world?

<sup>3</sup> Luke xiv. 14.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 8.

<sup>5</sup> Isa. x. 18.

<sup>6</sup> "Harder and heavier by so much to bear, as he is in worth and regard greater that mispersuadeth them." Hooker, v. lxii. 9.

Hooker thus writes, Works, Vol. iii. Ed. Oxon. 1836. Book vii. chap. xxiv. 5, p. 381.

"Bishops were wont to be men of great learning in the laws both civil and of the Church; and while they were so, the wisest men in the land for counsel and government were Bishops."

Ibid.—p. 390.

"Bishops which will be esteemed of as they ought, must frame themselves to that very pattern from whence those *Asian Bishops unto whom St. John writeth* were denominated, even so far forth as this our frailty will permit; *shine they must as Angels of God* in the midst of perverse men. They are not to look that the world should always carry the affection of Constantine, to bury that which might derogate from them, and to cover their imbecilities. More than high time it is that they bethink themselves of the Apostle's admonition, *Attende tibi*, 'Have a vigilant eye to thyself.' They err if they do not persuade themselves that wheresoever they walk or sit, be it in their Churches or in their consistories, abroad and at home, at their tables or in their closets, they are in the midst of snares laid for them. Wherefore as they are with the prophet every one of them to make it their hourly prayer unto God, 'Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness, because of mine enemies;' so it is not safe for them, no not for a moment, to slacken their industry in seeking every way that estimation which may further their labours unto the Church's good. Absurdity, though but in words, must needs be this way a maim, where nothing but wisdom, gravity, and judgment is looked for."

<sup>7</sup> Jude 13.

Will he not be lost in the night, and founder in the deep, or strike on the rocks of heresy, or be stranded on the quicksands of unbelief?

And surely, my brethren, if there ever was a time in England, when the Church needed a learned Clergy and, above all, a learned Episcopate, it is the present. Our *foundations are out of course*, the *earth is full of darkness and cruel habitations*<sup>8</sup>. Our old landmarks are removed. The authority of Scripture is openly impugned, its Inspiration denied, its veracity questioned; it is cast aside by many with sceptical scorn and indignation as an exploded fable or visionary dream. False prophets have arisen among us. We see an array of Literature and Philosophy enlisted against Religion. We behold angels of darkness, ministers of the Evil One, deluding the world with strange apparitions, and illusory miracles, and legendary superstitions. Who shall take up arms, and wield the weapons of the Gospel, against this terrible conspiracy? Who will come forward as Champions of Christ to confront the enemy? The *extraordinary* gifts of the Spirit have been withdrawn from the Church. The power of *speaking with new tongues* and the *discerning of spirits* has ceased, the days of miracles are passed away; we must now depend on *ordinary* means,—on industry, vigilance, courage, zeal, prudence, wisdom, learning, and authority, quickened and elevated by Divine Grace given to fervent prayer, solitary study, and quiet meditation.

For a successful issue to this conflict we must look, under God, to the labours of a large and learned Episcopate<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> Ps. lxxxii. 5; lxxix. 20.

<sup>9</sup> It is obvious that this is more necessary now, that by the diminution of Capitular dignities, and by the reduction of them to almost the lowest modicum requisite for the performance of the daily and



But how can we reasonably expect that this difficult and dangerous work can be duly performed even by Angels who have half a million, or more than a million, of souls committed to their care, and whose time is taxed to the degree it is with the labour of correspondence, and public speaking, and attendance in popular assemblies, so as to leave little rest for the realization of the wise man's saying, "The wisdom of a learned man cometh by opportunity of leisure, and he that hath little business shall become wise<sup>1</sup>."

And what, my brethren, will be the consequence? If the Episcopate of a Church be no longer the teaching Body of the Nation; if the oracular light of the sacred Urim and Thummim shine not with a clear and steady lustre upon the breast of the Hierarchy; if the Pastors and People seek not counsel there, then alas for the Ark of God! then we may tremble for it! it will fall into the hands of the Philistines!

If the lambs and sheep of Christ's fold look not for guidance to their Chief Pastors, and listen not to their voice, then the Flock will be scattered, they will wander without a guide in the wilderness of error, they will fall a prey to the prowling wolves of heresy and schism, or be lost in the pitfalls of Infidelity.

IX. Let us also consider the results in another respect. *Feed My Sheep, Feed My Lambs*, was the charge of the Great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls to His zealous and loving Apostle<sup>2</sup>, and in him to all his

weekly duty of Cathedrals, they have almost lost the power which they formerly possessed of rewarding and fostering Sacred Learning and Literature.

<sup>1</sup> Ecclus. xxxix. 24; and S. Gregor. Pastoral. 1. iv.: "Sæpe suscepta cura regiminis cor per diversa diverberat, et impar quisque invenitur ad singula dum confusa mente dividitur ad multa. Unde quidam sapiens providè prohibet dicens, *Fili, ne in multis sint actus tui* (Ecclus. xi. 10)."

<sup>2</sup> John xxi. 15—17.

successors in his Apostolic Office ; and the Great Bishop and Shepherd of our souls teaches us, with what special application to the souls of individuals this office is to be exercised when He says, *The Good Shepherd knows his sheep and they know his voice*, and he calleth his *own sheep by name*<sup>3</sup>.

Therefore the Church of Christ has a motherly care for each of His little ones. When she presents them to Him in the holy Sacrament of Baptism, she gives a solemn charge that they be taught, *so soon as they are able to learn*, what a solemn vow, promise, and profession they have there made ; and she adds a charge that they be brought to the *Bishop to be confirmed by him, so soon as they can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments*, and be further instructed in the Church Catechism.

Here is a wise and solemn injunction ; and if it were duly complied with, we should not have those miseries to deplore which now beset us ; we should enjoy the inestimable blessings vouchsafed to a religious People.

Catechizing is the primary part of Spiritual Husbandry. It prepares the heart for the better reception of Divine grace. In vain is the seed of the Word sown by the hand of the Preacher, unless the soil has been tilled and ploughed into fruitful furrows by the previous care of the Catechist.

And how holy a work is that of Confirmation ! By it the successor of the Apostles is brought into every Parish in his Diocese. He sees, and is seen ; he loves, and is loved. He brings with him the blessings of his office to the homes and hearts of all. How conducive is it to Unity and Love ! The little ones of Christ are gathered together beneath the shadow of his hands, as

<sup>3</sup> John x. 14. 3. See the note of Theophylact on this passage.

The remarks of Bishop Latimer, Sermons on the Plough, pp. 12—14 (Sermon VI., Parker Soc.), may here occur to our readers.

brothers and sisters of one and the same family in Christ, to receive a father's blessing; and thus is presented on earth a beautiful picture of that universal love of our Heavenly Father, which would embrace us all with the arms of His mercy, and fold us all to His bosom.

If England is to be restored to spiritual life, it will be by means of Catechizing, and by the due administration of the Apostolic Rite of Confirmation. And we cannot expect the former, unless we may enjoy the latter.

But how can this be, in our present circumstances? We have indeed reason to thank God for the zeal and self-sacrifice with which our Chief Pastors labour in the work of Confirmation. We bear them record that *to their power, yea, and beyond their power*, they are willing to *spend themselves and be spent*<sup>4</sup> in dispensing those precious gifts of the Holy Ghost which are vouchsafed to the youthful soldiers of Christ in that holy Ordinance, and which arm and equip them to fight the Lord's battles in the world. But how can our Bishops, suffice for this arduous work? how can it be done adequately? They require no Jethros to tell them, the thing *is too heavy for them, they are not able to perform it*<sup>5</sup>.

And what are the results of this inadequacy? We might advert with regret to the necessity thence arising, for restricting, in some Dioceses, the reception of Confirmation to a later age than that which is contemplated by the Church<sup>6</sup>, so that many young persons

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. viii. 3; xii. 15.

<sup>5</sup> Exod. xviii. 18.

<sup>6</sup> See the directions at the close of the Baptismal Office. The intentions of our Reformers who framed that office are sufficiently evident from the Canons promulged and adopted by Archbishop Parker and the Bishops of both provinces in 1571, which required that every one should be a Communicant at *fourteen years of age*.—

who may be snatched away by death before the age of sixteen, are cut off—as by an interdict—from the enjoyment of those precious gifts of the Holy Ghost bestowed in Confirmation, and by consequence are debarred from the reception of the blessings of pardon, peace, and joy, which are granted to the faithful soul in the holy Eucharist<sup>7</sup>. And yet we need not scruple to say, that many among these young persons who are thus shut out, perhaps for ever, from the full enjoyment of Christian privileges in this world, are richly adorned with youthful graces of gentleness, meekness, humility, and love, and so are eminently qualified to receive the gifts of the Holy Ghost and the presence of Christ in their hearts.

We might also refer with sorrow to the exigency for perfunctory<sup>8</sup> and irregular modes of administering the

Cardwell's Synodalia, i. 120. See also Archbishop Grindal's Injunction in 1571, Cardwell's Documentary Annals, i. 336. George Herbert's admirable remarks on this subject ("Country Parson," chap. xxii.) may perhaps suggest themselves to the reader. The Author will not be supposed to say that every one at fourteen ought to be confirmed.

<sup>7</sup> By the CXIIth Canon of 1603 all Parishioners were to be presented as delinquents, "who, being of the age of sixteen years, received not the Communion at Easter before."

Suppose the inhabitants of a parish which has only an opportunity of Confirmation offered it *once in three years*,—then those persons who in 1854 were not quite sixteen, and therefore not then admitted to Confirmation, would be liable to be presented under the Canon aforesaid, at the Visitations in 1855 and 1856, for breaking a law which they could not keep.

<sup>8</sup> On account of the numbers to be confirmed, the words of Confirmation are sometimes spoken to rail-fulls of children at once. And yet, notwithstanding this, in some populous districts not one in fifty of those who ought to be confirmed is confirmed.

Another evil arising from large and promiscuous Confirmations is, that the Church is almost *filled* by the *Candidates* for Confirmation—to the exclusion of those who might derive very great benefit from being present—*viz.* those who *have been confirmed*.

rite of Confirmation, as another unhappy result of this inadequacy. Have we not seen, alas! in some of our Dioceses, children collected together, stowed in close-packed companies, and conveyed from several villages, some perhaps at a considerable distance, taken away from parents and friends, to a central provincial town. And for what purpose? To be confirmed! to renew their Baptismal Vow of renouncing the world, the flesh, and the devil! to profess their faith and obedience, and to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost!

Nay, my brethren, must it not rather be feared that these children, being collected together under such circumstances, disturbed by bustle, distracted by levity, exposed to temptation, may then grieve the Holy Spirit Whose gifts they come to receive, that they may then violate the Baptismal Vows which they come to renew, that they may fall a prey to the Evil One whose service they come to renounce with their own mouths in the presence of God and the Church?

X. Again, another consideration. A Confirmation is held in a Diocese. In many places, hundreds, and in other places, thousands, who ought to be confirmed, are not presented for Confirmation. The Confirmation is over; the opportunity is lost, and in many cases an interval of three years elapses, before another Confirmation occurs. And what in the mean time has become of those who were not confirmed? Some have been called away to their great account; others are gone out into the world, or have emigrated into foreign lands, and it is too probable that they never will be confirmed; and if so, will never become Communicants; they will never attain to full membership in the Body of Christ. They will fall away into schism, indifference, or unbelief; and thus it comes to pass that the Church of Christ, in this land, is like

Rachel weeping for her children, her lost children, and cannot be comforted<sup>9</sup>.

XI. Once more, with regard to the Clergy. It is our duty to catechize the little ones of Christ, to train them step by step and day by day, till they arrive at the measure of the *stature of the fulness of Christ*<sup>1</sup>. We must never remit this labour. And it would not be relaxed,—as it is,—if Confirmations could be administered, not only with that frequency, but also with that fatherly solicitude due to the spiritual welfare of each particular Parish, and of each particular soul. But now, too often, it must be confessed, this duty of Catechizing is neglected, to the great danger and injury of Christ's little ones. It is supplanted by other instruction, more congenial to a worldly spirit, and more conducive to worldly interests. The Schoolmaster,—and perhaps even the Clergyman—prepares the scholars of the Parochial School with a view to the visit of the School Inspector,—and not of the Bishop. And the name and functions of Bishop,—Episcopus, or Inspector,—are thus transferred to another; who, as far as Education is concerned, has almost become the Bishop of the Diocese<sup>2</sup>. And the preparation for Con-

<sup>9</sup> Jer. xxxi. 15.

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iv. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Zealous and laudable efforts have been recently made for the extension of Diocesan Inspection. But it will be comparatively inoperative as long as all the substantial rewards bestowed on scholars and teachers are dispensed by other hands than those of the Diocesan Inspector. There is too much practical truth in the question, "*Quis enim virtutem amplectitur ipsam Præmia si tollas?*" and where there are two concurrent systems of Inspection,—one remunerative, the other not,—the result is too obvious. Another serious evil may arise. The system of which the Bishop is the head is thus presented to the eyes of teachers and scholars in his Diocese as subordinate to another system with no such superintendence. The position of the Church is thus disparaged and degraded in the minds of her people. It is earnestly to be wished that some plan could be devised for blending these two systems into one.

firmation, instead of being continuous, constant, and unremitting from infancy to childhood, from childhood to puberty, is too often driven as it were into a corner, —pressed into a brief period of a few weeks previous to Confirmation, which thus become a time of spiritual excitement, from which the soul, both of the Teacher and the taught, being wrought up beyond a healthful pitch, too often sinks to a state of indifference.

*The seven Stars are the Angels of the seven Churches.*  
We have traced some of the evils incurred by neglect of the sacred principle contained in these words.

XII. One more calamity of recent occurrence may be noticed.

If some of our largest towns had been provided with Bishops—if they had not been left without Stars,—and if the whole firmament of England's Church had been duly illumined and bespangled with constellations, adequately filling its sacred vault and reflecting a steady light, can we suppose, my brethren, that the hand of the Bishop of Rome would have ever attempted to fix any new stars there, and that we should have now to lament that the minds of many among us are bewildered by the false light of those delusive meteors?

No! this would have been impossible. That act of the Bishop of Rome which we deplore and denounce is due in great measure to ourselves; it is ascribable to our own neglect. We have left the space dark and untenanted; we have abandoned our greatest cities unsanctified and uncared for; we have left our Liverpools and our Birminghams without Stars and Angels; and by a righteous retribution they have fallen into the hands of the enemy.

XIII. Thus, then, we have traced a picture, it may be called a dark one, of our present condition. It was necessary to do so; we cannot proceed in the work of

Religious Restoration, unless we ascertain where the fabric is decayed.

Thanks be to Almighty God, the foundations still remain. We have the Apostolic Institution of Episcopacy preserved from Apostolic times. We have not therefore to lay new foundations; but to enlarge and consolidate the old, and to make our spiritual edifice commensurate with the exigencies of the times<sup>3</sup>.

We have a plan before us drawn by the finger of God. We see a sacred pattern of Diocesan Episcopacy in the pages of Holy Scripture. We behold it in the Churches of Asia. It is a Divine Plan, well suited to ourselves. Many of the places in which those Churches were planted were large commercial Cities like our own; and through the care of the Holy Apostles and the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, they were all richly endowed with the spiritual blessings dispensed by an effective Episcopate. The Angels of those Churches

<sup>3</sup> An objection may be noticed here. Some appear to think that an increase in the Episcopate would tend to lower its secular position and to diminish its social importance.

No one can deny the spiritual advantage now derived from the temporal dignity of the Episcopate in England.

But if the question be reduced to this dilemma;—"Either retain the temporal dignity and do not increase the spiritual efficiency of the Episcopate, or increase the efficiency and do not retain the dignity,"—a majority of the Clergy and Laity would, it is probable, not hesitate to choose the latter alternative.

But is it necessary that the question should assume this form? No; not, at least, at present. If a reasonable addition be made in time, it would be possible to obtain the requisite efficiency without a sacrifice of any of the *real* benefits (for some which are *called* benefits may perhaps be *not real*, or be more than counterbalanced by disadvantages) derived from the temporal position of the Episcopate. Whereas, if such an addition be not made, the time may come when either Episcopacy may be lost to the Church of England, or else reduced, by a violent reaction and tumultuary increase (something like that contemplated in 1641), to almost Presbyterian parity.



were bright luminaries to Asia and the world; and even at this day Christendom rejoices in their light, and they will shine for ever in heaven, like the *splendour of Arcturus and Orion, or as the sweet influences of the Pleiades*<sup>4</sup>; for they that are wise shall be as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the Stars for ever and ever<sup>5</sup>.

In fine, let us, my brethren, follow the guidance of the Holy Ghost<sup>6</sup>. Let England imitate Asia. A part of our land, if the truth be spoken, is lying in heathen darkness. Let us endeavour to win it to Christianity by the same means as were employed by the Apostles under the inspiration of God<sup>7</sup>. Let the Episcopate be extended and amplified according to the needs of the population, so that every soul may feel that he has a Father in God.

Then blessed will be the results. By such a division of labour, our existing Episcopate would gain new life; it would be able, according to the Apostle's advice, to *give attendance to reading and holy meditation*. We might hope to see errors refuted and routed, and truths vindicated and established, by the sacred voice of the Episcopate. And if times of trial should arise, we may behold the heroic virtues and divine graces of an Ignatius and a Polycarp; we may look for men not unworthy to be named with the Basils and Chrysostoms of Asia; we may see a revival of the learning which once shone so brightly among us, and gave new

<sup>4</sup> Job ix. 9; xxxviii. 31. Amos v. 8.

<sup>5</sup> Dan. xii. 3.

<sup>6</sup> S. Augustine says that "the root of Christian society is extended throughout the world by means of Apostolic sees and successions of Bishops."—Ep. xlii.

"A law imperial there is" (says Richard Hooker, E. P. vii. viii. 1), "that sheweth that there was great care had to provide for every Christian city a Bishop as near as might be."

<sup>7</sup> A scheme for "Additional Cathedrals" has been published by an eminent Ecclesiastical Architect, Mr. G. G. Scott.

lustre to the Episcopal Dignity in the persons of a Jewel, a Ridley, an Andrewes, an Archbishop Ussher, a Pearson, and a Jeremy Taylor.

Then also we may be assured that a new impulse would be given to the building of Churches and to the supply of additional Clergy. This result has invariably followed the extension of the Episcopate in our Colonies<sup>8</sup>. And similar consequences may be anticipated from similar causes at home<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> As may be seen from the following Table :—

Diocese.	First Bishop Consecrated.	No. of Clergy at Foundation of Diocese.	No. of Clergy at present.
Nova Scotia	1787		72
Fredericton	1845	30	55
Quebec	1793	4	41
Montreal	1850	45	53
Toronto	1839	86	139
Rupert's Land	1849	5	12
Newfoundland	1839		47
Jamaica	1824		116
Barbados	1824	23	80
Antigua	1842	25	35
Guiana	1842	23	30
Calcutta	1814		125
Madras	1835		96
Colombo	1845	22	38
Cape Town	1847	14	59
Sydney	1836		54
Newcastle	1847	17	23
Melbourne	1847	3	25
Adelaide	1847	4	28
New Zealand	1841	12	49
Tasmania	1842	19	57

<sup>9</sup> The establishment of Episcopal Sees *at home* is even more urgent than the establishment of them *in the Colonies*, for this reason;—because if our home population are brought to feel the blessings of Episcopacy, then it is certain that they who emigrate to our Colonies will aid in establishing Episcopacy there. If England *had* realized the blessings of Episcopacy by an experimental knowledge of them at home, then Episcopacy would long since have been

Then also the Presbyters in our large Cities would not be left single in the crowd, spiritless and powerless and easy to be broken, or perhaps jarring with one another in unseemly discord, but strung together by the Episcopate, like the chords of a lyre, to make "sweet music to Christ<sup>1</sup>."

Then also Confirmations would be duly administered, Catechizings duly performed, Communicants proportionably increased, and thousands and millions of souls, which must otherwise pine and starve in the wilderness of this world, would be nourished and refreshed with spiritual manna from heaven.

This is the work before us, a work worthy of a great Nation, a work more glorious, and which will redound more to our National honour and happiness, than all the conquests we can achieve by Arts or Arms. And if this work be *not* done, we cannot hope for true glory and peace and prosperity at home, though our Fleets ride triumphant on the deep, and our Armies plant their standards and their trophies on the battlements and citadels of the enemy. . . . May God give us grace and enable us to effect this blessed work! Then happy will our land be, for it will *be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea*<sup>2</sup>.

propagated and flourished in the Colonies. But whereas the heart beat feebly, there could be but little life in the extremities. But now that Episcopacy has been planted in our Colonies—though as yet very insufficiently—we may hope that the example of the good effected through the instrumentality of the Colonial Episcopate may react upon the mother country, and remind us of the true principle by which the Missionary Work of the Church is to be done in our own land.

<sup>1</sup> Ignat. ad Ephes. iv.: τὸ γὰρ ἀξιολόμιστον ὑμῶν πρεσβυτέρων οὕτως συνήρμωσται τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ ὡς χορδαὶ καθαῖρα, διὰ τοῦτο ἐν τῇ ὁμοιοίᾳ ὑμῶν καὶ συμφώνῳ ἀγάπῃ Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ᾄδεται.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. xi. 9. Hab. ii. 14.

# NOTES.

## NOTE A.

### DIOCESES IN ENGLAND,

(Arranged according to Population in 1851):

—	Popula- tion in 1851.	Area in Acres.	County.	Population in 1851.	Bene- fices.	Curates.
1. LONDON .....	2,143,340	246,157	{ Essex (part of) .....	45,246	324	258
Do., on next avoid- ance of Winchester }	2,558,718		{ Kent (part of) .....	133,740		
			{ Surrey (part of) .....	77,778		
			{ Middlesex .....	1,886,576		
2. MANCHESTER .....	1,395,494	845,904	Lancaster (part of) ...	1,395,494	317	140
3. CHESTER .....	1,183,497	1,630,988	{ Chester .....	455,725	436	158
Do., on next avoid- ance of Carlisle... }	1,066,124		{ Lancaster (part of) ...	635,742		
			{ Cumberland (part of) ...	55,850		
			{ Westmoreland (part of) ...	36,180		
4. WINCHESTER .....	1,080,412	1,598,568	{ Southampton .....	405,370	523	285
Do., on next avoid- ance .....	717,421		{ Surrey (part of) .....	584,303		
			{ Channel Islands .....	90,739		
5. RIPON .....	1,033,457	1,567,793	York (part of) .....	1,033,457	410	149
6. LICHFIELD .....	1,022,080	1,740,607	{ Derby .....	296,084	536	154
			{ Stafford .....	608,716		
			{ Salop (part of) .....	117,280		
			{ Cornwall .....	355,558		
7. EXETER .....	922,656	2,530,780	{ Devon .....	567,098	657	166
8. YORK .....	764,538	2,261,493	{ York (part of) .....	764,538	534	205
			{ Warwick .....	475,013		
9. WORCESTER .....	752,376	1,037,451	{ Worcester .....	276,926	417	199
			{ Durham .....	390,997		
			{ Northumberland .....	303,568		
10. DURHAM .....	701,381	1,906,835	{ Cumberland (part of) ...	6,816	245	106
11. LINCOLN .....	677,649	2,302,814	{ Lincoln .....	407,222	797	309
			{ Nottingham .....	270,427		
12. NORWICH .....	671,583	1,994,525	{ Norfolk .....	442,714	910	364
			{ Suffolk (part of) .....	228,869		
			{ Hertford .....	167,298		
13. ROCHESTER .....	577,298	1,535,450	{ Essex (part of) .....	324,072	564	240
			{ Kent (part of) .....	85,928		
14. GLOUCESTER AND BRISTOL .....	538,109	1,000,503	{ Gloucester .....	458,805	442	189
			{ Wilts (part of) .....	59,880		
			{ Somerset (part of) .....	19,424		
			{ Bucks .....	163,723		
15. OXFORD .....	503,042	1,385,779	{ Berks .....	169,317	584	247
			{ Oxford .....	170,002		
			{ Cambridge .....	185,405		
			{ Bedford .....	124,478		
16. ELY .....	482,412	1,357,765	{ Huntingdon .....	64,183	529	191
			{ Suffolk (part of) .....	108,346		
			{ Leicester .....	230,308		
17. PETERBOROUGH .....	465,671	1,240,327	{ Northampton .....	212,380	536	184
18. BATH AND WELLS .....	424,492	1,043,059	{ Rutland .....	22,983	462	213
			{ Somerset (part of) .....	424,492		
19. CANTERBURY .....	417,099	914,170	{ Kent (part of) .....	396,098	352	166
			{ Surrey (part of) .....	21,001		
			{ Dorset .....	184,207		
20. SALISBURY .....	379,296	1,309,617	{ Wilts (part of) .....	194,341	449	196
			{ Berks (part of) .....	748		
21. CHICHESTER .....	336,844	934,851	{ Sussex .....	336,844	311	128
			{ Hereford .....	115,489		
22. HEREFORD .....	216,143	986,244	{ Salop (part of) .....	94,913	358	98
			{ Radnor (part of) .....	5,741		
			{ Cumberland (part of) ...	132,826		
23. CARLISLE .....	154,983	901,052	{ Westmoreland (part of) ...	22,107	137	28
24. SODOR AND MAN .....	52,387	180,000	Isle of Man .....	52,387	27	14

Bath and Wells, 18.  
Canterbury, 19.  
Carlisle, 23.  
Chester, 3.  
Chichester, 21.  
Durham, 10.

Ely, 16.  
Exeter, 7.  
Gloucester and Bristol, 14.  
Hereford, 22.  
Lichfield, 6.  
Lincoln, 11.

London, 1.  
Manchester, 2.  
Norwich, 12.  
Oxford, 15.  
Peterborough, 17.  
Ripon, 5.

Rochester, 13.  
Salisbury, 20.  
Sodor and Man, 24.  
Winchester, 4.  
Worcester, 9.  
York, 8.

—	Popula- tion in 1851.	Area in Acres.	County.	Population in 1851.	Bene- fices	Curates.
25. ST. DAVID .....	407,758	2,272,790	Brecon.....	61,474	412	116
			Cardigan .....	70,796		
			Carmarthen .....	110,632		
			Glamorgan (part of)...	51,741		
			Pembroke .....	94,140		
26. LLANDAFF .....	337,526	797,864	Radnor (part of) .....	18,975	230	89
			Glamorgan (part of)...	180,108		
			Monmouth .....	157,418		
			Carnarvon (part of) ...	2,157		
			Denbigh (part of) .....	80,420		
27. ASAPH .....	236,298	1,067,583	Flint.....	68,156	170	47
			Merioneth (part of) ...	13,529		
			Montgomery (part of)	54,888		
			Salop (part of) .....	17,148		
			Anglesea .....	57,327		
28. BANGOR .....	192,964	985,946	Carnarvon (part of) ...	85,713	129	60
			Denbigh (part of) .....	12,163		
			Merioneth (part of) ...	25,314		
			Montgomery (part of)	12,447		

N.B. The population stated in this Table is derived from the official Census made more than three years ago (March, 1851), consequently a *large addition* must now be made to it, in order to form an estimate of the population of each diocese in the present year (1854).

The following is a Table of Population in 1851 of the principal towns of England and Wales, shewing the *increase* between 1801 and 1851 :—

—	Population in 1851.	Population in 1801.
London (district).....	2,362,236	958,876
Manchester with Salford .....	401,321	94,876
Liverpool .....	375,955	82,295
Birmingham.....	232,841	70,670
Leeds .....	172,270	53,162
Bristol .....	137,328	61,153
Sheffield .....	135,310	45,755
Wolverhampton .....	119,748	30,584
Bradford .....	103,778	13,264
Newcastle-upon-Tyne.....	87,784	33,048
Hull .....	84,690	29,580
Stoke-on-Trent .....	84,027	23,278
Oldham.....	72,357	21,677
Portsmouth .....	72,096	33,226
Brighton .....	69,673	7,440
Preston.....	69,542	12,174
Norwich .....	68,195	36,238
Sunderland .....	67,394	24,998
Merthyr Tidvil .....	63,080	10,127
Bolton .....	61,171	17,966
Leicester .....	60,584	17,005
Nottingham .....	57,407	28,801
Bath .....	54,240	33,196
Stockport .....	53,835	14,830
Plymouth .....	52,221	16,040
Blackburn .....	46,536	11,980
Exeter .....	40,688	17,412
Derby .....	40,609	10,832

## NOTE B.

THE following paragraphs, derived from authors of various sentiments in other respects, shew a remarkable *consensus* on this subject, and they are cited here on that account, and not because in citing them the Author of the above Discourse is willing to pronounce or adopt any opinion here, as to the means by which, or the degree to which, the proposed increase may be made.

From *Principles of Church Reform*. By the Rev. Dr. Arnold. *January, 1833.*—p. 48.

“IN order to an efficient and comprehensive Church system, the *first thing* necessary is to *divide the actual dioceses*. Every large town should necessarily be the seat of a Bishop, the Bishopric thus created giving no seat in Parliament; and the addition of such an element into the society of a commercial or manufacturing place, would be in itself a great advantage. The present Dioceses might then become Provinces, or if it should be thought desirable to diminish the number of Bishops in the House of Lords, the number retained might correspond to the number of Provinces which it might be found convenient to constitute, so that Metropolitan Bishops alone should have seats in Parliament. And for the new Bishoprics to be created, the Deaneries throughout England would go a long way towards endowing them; while in many cases nothing more would be required than to change the name and office of the Incumbent of the principal Parish in the town; so that instead of being the minister of one church, he should become the Bishop of the Diocese, the income of his office remaining the same as at present.”

From *The Restoration of Suffragan Bishops recommended*. By the Rev. J. H. Newman. *London, 1835.*—p. 9.

“THIS *primá facie* case for an addition of Bishops is confirmed by the circumstance, that even three centuries ago, and prior to that increase, such a measure was actually contemplated by our Reformers. Prior to those local accumulations of population, which present so distressing a problem to the Christian philanthropist, and to that inveterate spirit of unbelief, that systematized opposition to the vital and ancient doctrines of religion, which is the perplexity of the orthodox Churchman, *Cranmer*, in the first years of his primacy, projected a considerable extension of the episcopal office. On the

confiscation of the Abbey lands (1539), he advised Henry to endow with the proceeds from *fifteen to twenty new Sees*, five of which were actually created, and now remain.

“Another plan for increasing the efficiency of the Church, which he succeeded in executing to the extent of his wishes, was the addition of *Suffragans* to the existing Sees to the number of twenty-six. It appears, then, that finding the whole number of Bishops *twenty-one*, he designed to have it raised at least to *sixty*, i. e. to have nearly trebled it, with a view to meet the wants of the Church at *that day*; whereas five only, scarcely more than an eighth part of the addition he contemplated, were created.

“Ussher, whose authority in matters of ecclesiastical discipline has always been popular, went much farther than Cranmer, though he had in part a different object in view in the reformation he proposed. He was desirous, perhaps, of removing from the episcopate some part of that secular appearance which accidentally attaches to it in inconsiderate minds, when the Sees are few and richly endowed; yet undoubtedly he is a witness, and a most important one, of the desirableness of what may be called a *resident* Episcopacy, and of an increase of the number of Bishops for that purpose. In a plan which he drew up in 1641, when the first committee on Church affairs was formed, he proposed that Suffragan Bishops should be appointed equal to the number of Rural Deans in each Diocese, with a jurisdiction extending over the respective deaneries. This project, indeed, did not deserve, any more than it met with, success; but the testimony which it bears to the need of increased episcopal superintendence is corroborated by the declaration put forth by Charles II. in 1660, in which Suffragan Bishops are promised in the larger Dioceses, though this intention was never fulfilled.”

*Ibid.*—p. 14.

“Such arguments are to be found in the enormous size of some of our present Dioceses, as is partly allowed, partly implied, in the words of the Royal Commission. Considering the peculiar nature of the duties of a Christian Pastor, surely a population rising from 900,000 to 1,800,000, was never intended to be the charge of one man.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“If they are able to sustain such duties, they are greater than the inspired lawgiver of Israel, who said, ‘*I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me.*’ Nothing is more necessary to the Rulers of the Church, than that they should have seasons of leisure. A whirl of business is always unfavourable to

depth and accuracy of religious views. It is one chief end of the institution of the ministerial order itself, that there should be men in the world who have time to think apart from it, and live above it, in order to influence those whose duties call them more directly into the bustle of it. So much was this felt in early times, that places of retreat were sometimes assigned to the Bishops at a distance from their city, whither they were expected to betake themselves, during certain seasons of the year, for the purpose of collecting their minds."

*Ibid.*—p. 16.

"What I have said suggests another view of the subject. Much is said about the advantages of a *resident Clergy*, and these certainly cannot easily be overrated; but surely there are as great benefits resulting from a *resident Episcopacy* also. I own I cannot enter into the views of those who, measuring the duties of the Bishop's office by the number of his Clergy, contend that, because these, though far more numerous than formerly, have not increased of late years proportionably to the population, therefore we want no increase of the Episcopal Order; or who set against the increase of routine business, the present improvement of the *roads*, the *expeditiousness of posting*, and the promptness and precision of communications of all sorts. Certainly if the office and work of a Bishop lie chiefly in being a referee, or controlling power, in matters of business, without present or personal superintendence, without the influence of name and character, without real jurisdiction, without actual possession and use of his territory, then, indeed, a modern writer's assertion will be true, that all the Bishops of England may be swept away without the people knowing the change<sup>1</sup>. If he is mainly the functionary of statutes, the administrator of oaths, the agent of correspondence about the building of churches, the management of societies, and the 'serving of tables,' important as these objects are, still surely they would be much better accomplished by putting the Episcopate into commission. One general board would manage the ecclesiastical business of the kingdom far more promptly and uniformly than a number of persons chosen without special reference to such qualifications. But if a Bishop is intended to bear with him a moral influence, to have the custody of the Christian Faith in his own place and day, and by his life and conversation to impress it in all its saving fulness of doctrine and precept upon the face of society, if he is to be the centre and emblem of Christian unity, the bond of many minds, and the memento of Him that is unseen, he

<sup>1</sup> Hallam, *Const. Hist.* ch. xv. (Vol. iii. p. 238.)



must live among his people. Let us not forget that great ecclesiastical principle which is as fundamental in Christianity as it is in its nature the offspring of a profound philosophy. 'One Bishop, one Church,' is a maxim so momentous, that, if his presence can by no expedient be made to extend through it, there is sufficient reason for dividing it into two. He is in the theory the one pastor of the whole fold; and though by name an overseer or superintendent, yet his office lies quite as much in being seen in his diocese, as in seeing. Human nature is so constituted as to require such resting-places for the eyes and hearts of the many. Some minds there may be of peculiar make, whether of unusual firmness or insensibility, who can dispense with authorities to steady their opinions, and with objects for the exercise of their affections; but such is not the condition of the mass of mankind. They cry out clamorously for guides and leaders, and will choose for themselves if not supplied with them. Here, then, Christianity has met our want in the episcopal system, and in extending the influence of that system we are co-operating with it."

From *Bingham's Antiq.* ix. 8, fin.

"IF she [the Church of England] should think fit to add forty or a hundred more [Bishops] she would not be without precedent in the practice of the primitive Church.' . . . This was written at the beginning of the eighteenth century, when the population was about a *fourth* of what it is now."

From *Rev. W. Palmer's* (Worcester Coll.) *Enquiry into means of Church Extension.* London, 1841.—p. 28.

"ANCIENT Asia Minor and North Africa, which were perhaps twice or three times as large as England and Wales, contained respectively 400 and 500 Sees. Ancient Egypt, Libya, and Pentapolis, which, probably, never contained a population in any degree approaching to ours, contained 108 Episcopal Sees.

"Looking to the invariable rule of the ancient Church, to place a Bishop in every great city, for the purpose of giving energy, unity, and consistency to the large body of Clergy collected there, it seems strange indeed to think that places like Liverpool, Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, Nottingham, Sheffield, Derby, Newcastle, Bath, Plymouth, and many other towns of great population and importance, should have been so long left without resident Bishops. Romanism has, with its usual quick-sightedness, availed itself of our deficiencies, and fixed the residences of its pretended Bishops in

large cities, where none of our Bishops are stationed. Birmingham, Bath, Wolverhampton, Liverpool, and other important stations, are thus circumstanced; and in some of these places Romish ecclesiastics are gradually assuming a position, which can only arise from the want of Bishops in those localities."

The Bishop of Lincoln writes as follows:—"I am of opinion that the creation of new sees, and the subdivision of dioceses, is a measure urgently needed. The diocese from which I write (Lincoln) is a striking illustration of this need. Reduced though it has been from its former limits, it contains 822 parishes or ecclesiastical districts (612 in Lincolnshire, 210 in Notts,) in an area of 3,448 square miles. This is a district which it is impossible to superintend with due attention to the circumstances, wants, and condition of each parish and its pastor; and a bishop who should wish to preach in every church in the diocese, and should *devote one Sunday to each parish, would require more than fifteen years to make the circuit.* The result of this disproportionate size of a diocese to the powers of any one man is, that there cannot be confidential and intimate communication between the bishop and his clergy; that many of the most deserving clergy are unappreciated and unknown; that Confirmations are less frequent than they ought to be; and that the bishop, instead of being looked upon by the laity as their chief pastor, is known only as a state officer,—rarely seen by any, by many never,—who has to perform certain functions at distant intervals.

"The remedy as to this diocese is obvious; to erect Nottinghamshire into a separate diocese, with its see at Southwell. To this should, probably, be added the Isle of Axholme.

"I have no means of judging whether the endowment of such a see could be provided by the improved management of the estates of the chapters of Lincoln and Southwell, but, if not, I have little doubt that it could out of the episcopal estates of Lincoln. Nor is it unreasonable to believe, judging from the analogy of the colonial bishoprics,—only too closely applicable to the manufacturing districts of Nottinghamshire,—that as much, at least, would be effected for church extension by the presence and concentrated influence of a bishop, as could be done if the sum appropriated to the endowment of the see were expended in the endowment and augmentation of livings. These remarks will apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to several other dioceses in England." (*Riseholme*, Jan. 10, 1854.)

## SERMON XXXVII.

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### THE DIACONATE.

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ACTS vi. 5—8.

*“And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people<sup>1</sup>.”*

FEW histories in the world are so beautiful, interesting, and instructive as that in the Acts of the Apostles, concerning St. Stephen. He laid down his life for Christ, and he was the first to tread the path of Christian Martyrdom. In this respect he stands alone. He was like a Traveller entering an unexplored region; a Mariner launching on an unknown sea. The Poets of old celebrated the courage of the Argonaut, who first faced the perils of the Deep; History has immortalized Columbus, who discovered a new Continent. In our own times the daring of those is famous, who have encountered the dangers and hardships of an Arctic Winter, and have opened the doors of a passage never unclosed before.

<sup>1</sup> Preached on Sunday afternoon, June 18, 1854.

I. But who of these, my brethren, can be compared with St. Stephen? Consider his position. He was setting forth on a journey to an unknown clime, launching on an untried voyage. And whither was he going? Not to any earthly region, not on any sea of this world; he had before his eyes a prospect overhung with clouds,—a path that no mortal eye had penetrated, no mortal foot had ever trod.

He was about to pass through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, for Christ. He was a Christian Argonaut, a spiritual Columbus, a Navigator about to sail through a yet untraversed passage to the boundless Ocean of Eternity. What perils were there! If Jesus, for Whom he was about to die, were *not* the Christ, if He were *not* the Son of God, coequal with God,—then St. Stephen was *not* a Martyr. No! Then, in asserting Christ's Divinity, he would have been guilty of invading the prerogatives and outraging the dignity of Jehovah. And then, terrible thought! he would have been going into the presence of God, with words of impiety in his mouth; the dissolution of his body would have been the death of his soul; his dying prayer, "*Lord Jesus, receive my spirit,*" would have been the language of blasphemy.

But no. With intrepid courage and unruffled calmness he surveys the dark sea before him; his sails are filled with a prosperous gale—a blessed *πληροφορία* of faith, breathed on them by the Holy Ghost,—and he views the terrible storm of the furious passions of his enemies, gnashing on him with their teeth, and seizing stones to cast at him; he beholds them with holy confidence and sweet serenity; and his visage, so far from being disturbed by the violent hurricane which assailed him, is calm as a summer sea; it is lit up with a sunbeam from heaven—he is transfigured—  
*"and all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly*

*upon him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel."*

Oh glorious triumph of Divine Grace moving in the heart of man! Oh noble victory of the Holy Ghost the Comforter, shedding abroad the blessed influences of peace and love and joy on the soul of the faithful Disciple, the blessed Martyr, amid the tumultuous conflict and phrensied rage of his enemies, and giving him strength from above to bear witness to the truth, and to lay down his life with gladness, and to breathe forth a prayer for those who stoned him!

"*Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.* And when he had said this, he fell asleep." His journey was now at an end; his voyage was over; he had passed through the Straits of Death, and he now cast anchor for ever in a Haven of heavenly peace.

II. Here, my beloved brethren, is divine comfort for ourselves. The time must come, we know not how soon, when each of us must pass through the grave and gate of death. But what then? If he,—St. Stephen, who *first* trod the path of death for the sake of Christ,—was enabled to enter it with so much confidence and joy, by the grace of the Holy Ghost, wherefore should we fear to pass along the same road, now that it has become like a royal highway, trodden by so many steps; and now that it has been made like a beaten thoroughfare, or even like a paved military road, along which the noble army of Martyrs has marched to victory, cheered with heavenly music, and with the glorious standard of Christ unfurled in the eye of day; and now that *that* road has been traversed happily by our fathers and brethren, by tender women and young men, maidens and infants, who have fallen asleep in Christ, and now rest in peace? Why, my brethren, if we live the lives of Martyrs, that is, of faithful *witnesses* of Christ,—witnesses in our lives, however

humble, in our works however obscure,—why should we fear to die? If we so live, then St. Stephen's confidence may be our confidence, his hopes may be our hopes; then when we walk through the *valley of the shadow of death*, we shall fear no evil; we shall pray for all men, even for our enemies; we shall see heaven opened and behold the glory of God, and see Jesus standing at the right hand of God; we shall commend our souls to Christ, and when we have said this, then, by the grace of the Holy Spirit and by the merits of Christ Who liveth for ever to make intercession for us, we also may humbly hope that a light from heaven may shine upon our souls, and give us a view and a foretaste of angelic joys, and that we may fall asleep in Christ.

III. Let us now proceed to observe the mercy and love which characterize the dispensation of God's Providence in the choice of St. Stephen to be the First Martyr. St. Stephen was not an Apostle; he was not even a Presbyter of the Church. If he had been an Apostle or a Presbyter, it might perhaps have been thought that he had special spiritual gifts and graces vouchsafed to him in his official capacity, and enabling him to do what he did. But no, he was only a Deacon. He is presented to us in Scripture as the first among the Deacons, and the foremost among the Martyrs of the Church. As a Deacon he stood as it were at a middle point. On the one hand, by virtue of his ordination to the Diaconate and of those *spiritual* functions that he was thereby commissioned to discharge,—such as the administration of Baptism and the preaching of the Word,—he belonged to the Clergy<sup>2</sup>; but on the other hand, by reason of *other*

<sup>2</sup> See Bishop Pearson, Lect. iii. in Act. Apost. Abp. Whitgift Def. 584, 688. Hooker, v. lxxviii. 5.

functions of a *secular* kind,—such as attendance on the Poor, ministering to the Widows, providing from the alms of the Church for the service of the Tables, or ordinary meals, sanctified doubtless in those ages by the simultaneous reception of the Holy Eucharist,—he was engaged in the occupations of a Layman. Thus, then, he might be said to belong in part to the Clerical Order, and in part to the Laity, of the Church. And thus, the First Martyr is an example to us all, whether we be Clergy or Laity; he cheers us all with the joyful assurance that the palm and crown of Martyrdom may be ours; he enables each of us to cherish a reasonable hope, that, if, by a sound faith, and by a stedfast profession of it, and by holiness and charity, we imitate him in our lives, we may be happy, as he was, in our deaths, and be for evermore in glory with him—and with Christ.

IV. And here we are brought to a nearer consideration of the topic which is the main scope of our present enquiry,—the means of Religious Restoration in England.

One of the most momentous and difficult questions in our own age and country,—whether we regard our prospects as a nation, or consider our duties as Christians,—is this :

What measures may be adopted for mitigating the evils, and averting the perils, which threaten us from the prevalence of Indifference, Unbelief, and Ungodliness, especially in our populous cities ?

Where shall we look for guidance in this arduous matter ?

We must resort for counsel to the living oracles of God.

V. We have heavenly direction from the Holy Spirit Himself in this great question, in the history of St. Stephen.

Let us, then, consider its practical bearings on the subject before us, How are our populous cities to be Christianized ?

In examining that subject, we must consider the occasion on which St. Stephen and his brother Deacons were called to their office in the Church, and on which that office was instituted by the Holy Spirit of God.

“*In those days,*” we read, “*the number of the disciples was multiplied*”<sup>3</sup>. The Christian Diaconate owes its origin to the extension of the Church. Here is instruction for us. If, when the Church was beginning to enlarge her bounds in a single city, the Christian Diaconate was instituted, how much more is it requisite now !

And why was it instituted ?

The Apostolic Order existed ; the Order of Presbyters existed<sup>4</sup> ; but this was not enough. Something else must be added. Let us refer to the pages of Inspiration. We there read as follows : *There arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.* Two parties are mentioned here. One Hebrews, the other Grecians. Both these, it would appear, *had been* professors of Judaism, and had now embraced Christianity. The Hebrews were those of Hebrew extraction : the Grecians had been Jewish Proselytes<sup>5</sup>, Proselytes of righteousness, as they were called. It would seem that the widows of this latter class were treated with some disparagement, or imagined themselves to be so treated, in comparison with the widows of the Church who were of the Seed of Abraham. Perhaps they were placed in a lower position at the common tables of the Church, or received

<sup>3</sup> Acts vi. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Cp. Hooker, v. lxxviii. 4, 5.

<sup>5</sup> See Bp. Pearson, Lect. iii. in Act. Apost.



a smaller portion from the common fund. Hence *a murmuring arose*. It came to the ears of the Apostles, who did not treat it with neglect, but devised a remedy for it. "*It is not reason,*" they said, "*that we should leave the Word of God, and serve tables.*" We, the Chief Pastors of the Church, must not forsake spiritual things for secular. Nor must we require the Presbyters to do so. Our first care and theirs must be for the Soul. But then we may not forget the word and example of Christ our Divine Master, Who embodied in Himself the fulness of the Christian Ministry, and Who *went about doing good* to the Bodies of men, as well as their Souls, and imparted health to their souls, while He healed the diseases of their bodies. Therefore, though the Soul must have the *first* place, yet, even for the sake of the soul, the Body must have *some* place in the mind of the Church. She must love the Body, because created by God, and worn by Christ, and united to the Godhead, and designed for immortal glory, and beauty, and happiness, in heaven. She must love all men, in body and soul. We, then, the Apostles and elders of the Church, will give *ourselves continually to prayer, and to the Ministry of the Word*; but we will provide for the relief of the body, by appointing a Ministry expressly for that purpose. Thus both the soul and body shall be cared for, and receive sustenance and comfort, in due order and degree, in the Christian Church. And as, by God's appointment, the soul of man is united with his body in this world from birth to death, and will be reunited with it for ever in the world to come, and since man is constituted by God to receive holy influences by means of bodily ministrations, we, the Ministers of God, will follow in the footsteps of His providential dispensations, and of Christ's blessed example, and will endeavour to

save the soul by supplying the needs of the body. We will provide almsgiving, comfort, refreshment, and strength, both for body and soul. Therefore, they said, "*Look ye out for yourselves, brethren, seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. . . . And the saying pleased the whole multitude : and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a Proselyte of Antioch : whom they set before the Apostles : and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. And the word of God increased ; and the number of the Disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly ; and a great company of the Priests were obedient to the faith. And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.*"

Here, then, is a divinely inspired reply to the question before us, How should we deal with our populous cities? Here is a spiritual remedy for the evils that we now suffer, and a spiritual preventive of the greater evils which we shall be constrained to endure, unless we adopt in time energetic measures by God's help to avert them.

VI. The occasion of the Institution of the Diaconate in the Christian Church was, as we see, of a temporal character. It arose from bodily sufferings and physical afflictions, from poverty, pain, and privations, producing a spirit of discontent. The evil was not overlooked by the Apostles ; they overcame it by good, and converted it into an occasion and instrument of spiritual benefit, for the glory of God, the enlargement of the Church, and salvation of souls. Thus then we see here the true principles of Christian Charity. It is an error to imagine that any thing which provides for the body alone, without reference to the soul, can be called

by that sacred name ; or that any thing which endeavours to provide for the soul without caring for the body, can be called Christian Charity. Christian Charity ministers to the soul *through* the body, and to the body *for* the soul ; she has her mind's eye fixed on the soul while her hand ministers to the body, and her hand ministers to the body *because* her eye is fixed on the soul.

VII. We may also see here, in Scripture, a reflection of our own state.

The voice of murmuring is heard in our own streets ; we behold in our populous cities, Poverty and Wealth, Luxury and Misery, each in their extremes, placed side by side in sad and striking contrast. Our social system is in peril of being disorganized ; class is estranged from class, and arrayed, the one against the other, in jealous rivalry and violent antagonism : a spirit of discontent and disaffection has recently shown itself in our large cities in closed and silent factories, and in powerful combinations of large numbers of artisans leagued together against their employers : and thus our national Industry is in danger of being paralyzed, and the sources of our national wealth of being exhausted, our national peace disturbed, and faction and anarchy let loose among us. And then what will be the consequence ? Where will be reverence for authority and law ? where, security for property and life ? How can it be hoped, that if the evils we now suffer are not abated, but become more intense and inveterate, we should ever be able to wage a foreign war with reasonable hope of success ? No, no, my brethren, Union is strength ; we must have peace at home, if we are to be powerful abroad ; but if we are torn in pieces by intestine divisions, we cannot hope for safety ; we must rather look, sooner or later, for a foreign Invasion.

And how can we expect peace except we have the Spirit of Peace? and how can we look for His gifts, if we despise His counsels, and disobey His Will?

Our multitudes have greatly increased in our cities. In the present half-century our population has been more than doubled; and our means of grace which were not adequate for the population half a century ago, ought to have been doubled also. The number of our Bishops, Priests, and Deacons ought to have been increased in proportion to the increase of our population. But what has been the fact? As was observed in our last discourse, scarcely any addition has been made to the Episcopate during the last three hundred years<sup>6</sup>. And while the increase in the number of the people in the last fifty years has equalled its increase in all former generations, the increase in the number of our Clergy and in the means of their maintenance has borne no proportion whatever to this vast augmentation.

Can it then be said that we have followed the dictates of the Spirit of Peace as seen in this inspired history? We fear not; and we need not therefore be surprised at our present condition. But by God's mercy there is hope. The Holy Spirit speaks to us in this Scripture; while we have time, let us listen to His Voice, and obey it.

We have seen the occasion on which St. Stephen and his brother Deacons were called to their sacred office, and in that occasion we have recognized a resemblance to our own circumstances.

VIII. Let us now observe another characteristic in this history.

The Apostles instituted the Diaconate that they and

<sup>6</sup> See above, No. XXXVI.

the Presbyters under them might be relieved from worldly cares, and be enabled to devote themselves to the ministry of the Word and prayer. The Deacons were carefully selected from the whole multitude of the disciples. They were “*men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom*”<sup>7</sup>. And they were ordained by the Apostles by prayer and laying on of hands<sup>8</sup>. And then, being so chosen, and approved, and ordained, they entered on their office: they were authorized to preach and baptize, as appears from the history of St. Philip the Deacon<sup>9</sup>, and from that of St. Stephen, who was empowered to dispute with the Synagogue of the Libertines, and no one could resist the wisdom with which he spake<sup>1</sup>.

Here also in these particulars we see precepts for ourselves. We affirm, and are able to prove, that our Bishops are Successors of the Apostles in their ordinary powers and functions. And we who have been ordained to the second degree in the Christian Ministry, that of the Priesthood, derive our spiritual lineage and succession from the disciples of Christ. And now, in the present age, what, let us ask, is the condition in which the Bishops and Presbyters of the Church are placed, especially in our large cities? Must we not say that our Bishops have great cause to use the language of the Apostles, “*It is not reason that we should leave the Word of God and serve tables;*” and that they are often constrained to do what it is not reason that they should do? How much of secular business is devolved upon them! How little leisure is granted them for religious study and holy meditation! How rarely is it permitted them to withdraw themselves from the crowd of innumerable

<sup>7</sup> Acts vi. 3.

<sup>8</sup> Acts vi. 6.

<sup>9</sup> Acts viii.

<sup>1</sup> See also 1 Tim. iii. 8—13.

avocations that press upon them! And as for the Presbyters of the Church, especially in our populous cities, how various and distracting are the cares which beset us! I forbear the enumeration, which may safely be left to your own knowledge, and particularly to the experience of my brethren in the Ministry, who can bear witness that they are too often constrained to leave the Word of God, and to “serve tables.”

IX. But now you may perhaps say, “True, this may be the case. But then is not the remedy at hand? Is it not provided by the Church? Is not the *same* remedy that was devised by the Apostles, continued to us in our own day? Have we not the Diaconate? We open our Books of Common Prayer, we see there an ‘Office for the Making of Deacons,’ and we find this Scripture (from the Acts of the Apostles) there read as the Epistle.”

Yes, no doubt, we have the name, and, by God’s goodness, we have the thing, in our Prayer Books and in our Church Polity; but in practice and in fact,—we must almost confess,—we have it not. We have almost lost it<sup>2</sup>. Which of you perceives any marked

<sup>2</sup> The Poor Laws (dating from the time of Queen Elizabeth, 43 Eliz. c. 2), designed with the best intentions, and founded on a just and necessary principle of Christian Charity—that no one should be left to perish from lack of food and shelter—have had the effect of transferring, in a considerable degree, to other hands (those of Overseers and Relieving Officers) the duties which by Apostolic institution appertain to the Diaconate. Cp. Gibson, Codex, p. 150, note *n*.

Still there is more than scope enough for the functions of the Diaconate in rescuing the poor from the degradation and misery of Pauperism; and particularly in saving them from the privations, hardships, and demoralizing influence of the Union Workhouse, and in preserving them from those feelings of exasperation, discontent, disaffection, and disloyalty, which are too apt to arise in the mind

difference between the Priest and the Deacon? Who, among the multitudes around us, has any clear notion of any distinction between them? Who apprehends *such* a distinction as is traced by the finger of the Holy Spirit in the Word of God, and by our Church in her Book of Common Prayer<sup>3</sup>? We have hardly

of the Poor when they find themselves taken away from their Parishes to the Workhouse, perhaps by no fault of their own, and there separated from their wives and children, and are tempted to infer from their own sufferings there, that the Laws of their Country visit misfortune with penalties and treat Poverty as a Crime.

Hence the Diaconate may exercise a very beneficial influence of a preventive, supplementary, conciliatory, and remedial kind, which may commend it to the friendly regard and encouragement of the Christian Legislator and Philanthropist.

<sup>3</sup> The following passages from the "Form and Manner of Making of Deacons" in our Book of Common Prayer describe the duties of the Diaconate:—

“¶ *First the Archdeacon, or his Deputy, shall present unto the Bishop (sitting in his chair near to the holy Table) such as desire to be ordained Deacons (each of them being decently habited), saying these words,*

“Reverend Father in God, I present unto you these persons present, to be admitted Deacons.

“*The Bishop.*

“Take heed that the persons, whom ye present unto us, be apt and meet, for their learning and godly conversation, to exercise their Ministry duly, to the honour of God, and the edifying of his Church.

“¶ *The Archdeacon shall answer,*

“I have enquired of them, and also examined them, and think them so to be.

“*The Collect.*

“Almighty God, who by thy Divine Providence hast appointed divers Orders of Ministers in thy Church, and didst inspire thine Apostles to choose into the Order of Deacons the first Martyr Saint Stephen, with others; Mercifully behold these thy servants now called to the like Office and Administration; replenish them so with the truth of thy Doctrine, and adorn them with innocency of life, that, both by word and good example, they may faithfully serve thee in this Office, to the glory of thy Name, and the edification of

any *division of labour*. In a word, we may say, that almost every one in the Ministry is expected to do every thing. The Priest is constrained to undertake the secular work of the Deacon, and thus he becomes less efficient in the discharge of his spiritual duties; and the Deacon is tempted to forsake his proper sphere, and to regard the Diaconate, not as a distinct office, having important duties peculiar to it, but merely as a passport to the Priesthood<sup>4</sup>.

X. And what has been the result? Almost by a

thy Church; through the merits of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and for ever.  
*Amen.*

“*The Bishop.*

“It appertaineth to the Office of a Deacon, in the Church where he shall be appointed to serve, to assist the Priest in Divine Service, and specially when he ministereth the holy Communion, and to help him in the distribution thereof, and to read holy Scriptures and Homilies in the Church; and to instruct the youth in the Catechism; in the absence of the Priest to baptize infants, and to preach, if he be admitted thereto by the Bishop. And furthermore, it is his Office, where provision is so made, to search for the sick, poor, and impotent people of the Parish, to intimate their estates, names, and places where they dwell, unto the Curate, that by his exhortation they may be relieved with the alms of the Parishioners, or others. Will you do this gladly and willingly?

“*Answer.* I will so do, by the help of God.”

<sup>4</sup> Nothing shows in a more striking manner the sense which the Church entertains of the difficulty and dignity of the Priesthood than the difference of her language in her two Offices respectively for the Ordering of Priests, and for the Making of Deacons. And yet in practice, a young man, as soon as he is ordained Deacon, begins to perform almost every ministerial work which is reserved by the Church for the Priesthood. Some excellent remarks on this subject may be seen in Archdeacon Hale’s Essay, “The Duties of Deacons and Priests compared.” Lond. 1850.

The same learned writer has published (in his Charge for 1853) suggestions for the extension of the Ministry by the means of the *Lesser Orders of Ministers*.

But this proposition, which contemplates the exercise of “an honest



necessary consequence of this neglect, *other* means have been devised for discharging the duty of the

trade or calling" (p. 30), together with the discharge of the office of *Subdeacon*, raises a difficult question, viz. whether in a Christian country, in which the Church has long been settled, there ought to be any exception to the rule, "that they who preach the Gospel should *live of the Gospel*" (1 Cor. x. 11—14); and whether, now that extraordinary gifts of the Spirit have ceased, and the authority derived by the Apostles and early teachers from the power of working miracles has been withdrawn, the occasional practice of St. Paul in a very different time and country, and under very peculiar and exceptional circumstances (Acts xx. 34. 1 Cor. ix. 12. 2 Cor. vii. 2; xi. 9; xii. 13. 1 Thess. ii. 9. 2 Thess. iii. 8), in waiving his claim to maintenance and working with his own hands, can be drawn into a rule for the *legislative sanction* and *general practice* of the Church, or be made to contravene the general teaching of Holy Scripture, that "*the labourer is worthy of his hire*" (Luke x. 7. 1 Tim. v. 18); and "*no man that warreth entangleth himself in the affairs of this life*" (2 Tim. ii. 4); and whether the precept, "*Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them. Take heed unto thyself and unto thy doctrine; continue in them*" (ἐν τούτοις ἴσθι, 1 Tim. iv. 13—16), a precept given, it is true, to a Bishop, but to one who had extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, is not sufficient to make the Church pause before she accepts the divided allegiance of any man for the work of the ministry, and is content to share his affections with the claims and temptations of a worldly business, which may expose him to those sins, or even to a suspicion of those sins, by which Balaam and Judas fell, and which the Holy Spirit reprobates with the greatest severity in a Christian Minister (1 Tim. iii. 3. Titus i. 7. 11. 1 Pet. v. 2. 2 Pet. ii. 15. Jude 11).

The doctrine and practice of the ancient Church appear, on the whole, to be opposed to such an experiment; in the words of S. Jerome (apud Gratian. 88 Dist. Can. Negotiatorem): "*Antequam Ecclesiasticus quis sit, licet ei negotiari; facto jam non licet.*" See Forbes, *De Curâ Pastoralis*, cap. xx., cap. xxxii.

The language of English Law, Canon and Statute, is also explicit against it, e.g. Canon LXXV. and 21 Henry VIII. c. 13, which prohibits the Clergy from buying in order to sell any kind of cattle, corn, or merchandise. See also 57 Geo. III. c. 99, sect. 3.

And after all,—perhaps we may be allowed to add—when a fair trial *has been given* to the Diaconate, then it will be time to argue the

Christian Ministry, especially in our large cities. Practically, as has been observed, we have almost lost the Diaconate. We have left that sacred territory void and untenanted, and, as might have been anticipated, *other* parties have entered upon it. We refer now particularly—and with no feelings of ill-will, Heaven forbid!—to our Scripture Readers and City Missionaries. Their very names remind us of our own deficiencies and delinquencies. We have a Diaconate, but we have omitted to use it, and others have risen in its place<sup>5</sup>. For what is the proper office of a

question as to the expediency of instituting the office of Subdeacon of any of the Lesser Orders in the Church.

<sup>5</sup> On this subject Archdeacon Hale thus speaks in his Charge to the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of London, 1853, p. 17 :—

“A considerable number of the Clergy in large towns have availed themselves of the assistance of a new class of persons denominated Scripture Readers, who are employed in visiting the houses of the poor, in reading to them the Scriptures, and instructing them in the great truths of religion. It can scarcely be denied that these persons actually do share with the Incumbent the cure of souls; for though precluded from performing those public ministrations in which the Deacon is permitted to assist the Presbyter, they act ‘as messengers, watchmen, and stewards of the Lord; they teach and admonish; they feed and provide for the Lord’s family; they seek for Christ’s sheep that are dispersed abroad;’ not indeed in churches, but throughout the whole length and breadth of the parish. It is because these appear to me high and holy duties, that I venture to draw the attention of the Church at large to their real nature, and to invite our rulers to consider, whether there is not some irregularity in these proceedings; whether, if a lower order of ministry is needed, it is right to introduce it privately, by an arrangement, as it were, first between the Prelates themselves, and then between the Bishops and Incumbents; and whether they have power to create, or to restore, an order of Ministers, and to permit laymen to share in the spiritual charge of the people, without the consent of the Church at large, without order properly and legally made for their admission, government, and regulation.”

Ibid.—p. 19.

“I do not underrate the necessity, which may be pleaded to

Deacon? To be a Reader of Scripture and a Catechist; to be a Missionary in our large cities. Yes, our Deacons ought to be our Scripture Readers and City Missionaries; instead of which, our Scripture Readers and City Missionaries have almost become our Deacons. And now, it is to be feared that this new and irregular agency, (for so we may be permitted to call it,) devised doubtless with laudable motives and intentions for mitigating the evils that we suffer from our lack of the Diaconate, will *not* remedy those evils. . . . Heaven grant that it may not aggravate them!

XI. Why, it may be asked, do we speak thus?

Because it has pleased Almighty God to appoint divers orders in His Church, for the ministry of the Word; and we *have* a promise of His blessing in using the means He has appointed for that purpose, but we have *no* similar assurance, if we neglect those means, and resort to *other* agency invented by ourselves.

XII. Next, we would observe, that the Scripture Reader and the City Missionary will either undertake the work of preaching the Word of God in our large cities, or they will not.

If they do *not* undertake it, then we are constrained

justify this irregularity, but the proceeding is, I think, anomalous, and unsanctioned by the practice of the Church at any period of her history, whether before or since the Reformation. The Readers of whom mention is made in Strype's Annals, in the year 1559, and who were recognized in the Convocation of 1562, had no duties entrusted to them but those of public ministration, and only in parishes where there was no incumbent or curate; they were not allowed to interpret Scripture, but only to read what public authority appointed. They were not spiritual guides or teachers, but only public Readers of public offices. Their place was in the church, and no where else; and when a curate came, their occupation ceased."

to say, Here is missionary agency without missionary acts : why then does it exist ?

But suppose the other alternative. Suppose they do undertake the work of preaching the Word<sup>6</sup>, then we must be allowed to affirm that they undertake a sacred work, and a most difficult and dangerous one, without due call and mission. They undertake an office which St. Stephen and his brethren did not dare to undertake, without having been first proved to be fit for it, and without being specially ordained to it, and receiving spiritual gifts by the laying on of Apostolical hands ; they undertake an office which, now that the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit have been withdrawn, no one should presume to undertake without previous training and discipline, and without a public call and solemn admission to it.

XIII. Besides ; they engage in this difficult work in circumstances of peculiar hazard to themselves, and even to Religion itself. For it is well known that those who swell the ranks of Infidelity in our great cities, are too often found in the numerous class of mechanics and artisans. Among these are many who spend the morning of the Lord's Day,—not in resorting to the Lord's House,—but in reading the cheap and noxious publications of a semi-infidel Philosophy, or in poring over the pages of weekly periodicals, teeming with records of crime, and too often stimulating the passions to acts of anarchy and licentiousness. And these, let us remember, are persons who are not easily brought to become meek and humble, peaceable and loving—in a word, to embrace the Gospel. But they are men of active minds and practised intelligence,

<sup>6</sup> Report of City Mission, 1853, p. 55, By-law vi. : "The great object of every Missionary is to teach the people on his district the way of salvation by Jesus Christ."

often elated by proud imaginations, and self-confident vauntings of their own intellectual powers.

These are the persons, in our large cities, who stand now in special need of religious instruction.

The Scripture Reader and the City Missionary are sent to impart such instruction; and he will either enter into discussion and debate on matters of Religion with those to whom he is sent, or he will not.

If he avoids such discussion and debate, if he abstains from it, if he declines it, then, will it not be said, that the cause of which he is an advocate shrinks from the light? that the Christian Religion, of which he is an emissary, dares not enter the lists and encounter the weapons of Reason; and that, therefore, it cannot be true?

But, on the other hand, if he *does* enter into controversy, if he does engage in disputes on Religion with the mechanics and artisans of our populous cities, who are shrewd and intelligent men, and are often too well schooled in the sceptical cavils and objections against Christianity, and who are too often tempted by the Evil One to make an ostentatious display of their intellectual powers in arraigning the wisdom of God, from Whom they derive them; then, my brethren, is it not to be feared that our self-appointed champion of Christianity—untrained and undisciplined, not endowed with gifts of human learning, unschooled in ancient languages, uninitiated in Church History and doctrinal Theology, but caught up, it may be, a mere novice in the streets, or having failed perhaps in some secular calling, and yet hoping for success in the most difficult of all callings, that of endeavouring to win over the sceptic and the libertine to the faith of Christ—is it not to be feared, we say, that he will be worsted in the argument, that he will sustain an ignominious defeat, perhaps in the presence of many

bystanders, who are bribed by their passions to wish Christianity false, and that the sceptic and infidel adversary, having thus routed the champion of the Gospel, will affirm, with proud scorn, and profane mockery, and bitter contumely, and triumphant exultation, that he has routed the Gospel itself?

Thus the sceptic and unbeliever will be more and more confirmed and riveted in his own scepticism and unbelief; and the spectators of the conflict, and they who hear the report of its result, will be tempted to profess themselves Freethinkers. And thus, my brethren, it may come to pass, that by our ill-considered methods, and ill-assorted instruments, and ill-appointed agents for promoting Christianity in our large cities, we may, unintentionally, but not less surely, bring contempt on Christianity, and promote the cause of Unbelief.

XIV. Once more,—If persons, professing different forms of Christianity and calling themselves by the names of different sects, go forth into our populous cities, as Missionaries, what will be the consequence? If they who profess to teach others have no divine commission,—if in fact, they send themselves,—and if they do not bring one and the same doctrine, and have no common symbols of Faith, no common Creeds or Catechisms, and no common Prayer, if they have different *Psalms* and *different doctrines*<sup>7</sup>, and call themselves by different names of different sects, can it be expected, my brethren, that their teaching will be blessed by Him Who is the Author of Peace and Lover of Concord? And will not the unbeliever and scoffer turn back upon such teachers as these with a sneer of sceptical scorn? will not our mechanics and artisans, to whom they profess to preach the truths of the

<sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 26.

Gospel, say to these different emissaries of discordant sects, "First go back and *agree* among yourselves *what the truth is*, and then—but *not till then*—come and teach us <sup>8</sup>?"

XV. What has been now said, my brethren, has been spoken in plain language. The urgency of the case requires it. The dangers, temporal and spiritual, that besiege us, are very great, and every day, and every hour, are becoming greater. We dwell, as it were, in a beleaguered city. We have no time to waste in compliments; we must not *daub the wall with untempered mortar*<sup>9</sup>; but we must speak the truth, and speak it in love.

If therefore there be here present any Scripture Reader or City Missionary, or any who promote their operations, let us be permitted to address them in the language of Christian affection. We gladly allow that some good has been effected by their means; we wish to see that good increased—freed from admixture with evil—and done in the best way. We honour the zeal, we admire the piety, of many among them; we lament with them the spiritual destitution prevailing in our large cities; we deplore the lack of the means of grace which they are endeavouring to supply. Let them not suppose that we would stand still, and fold our arms in indolence in this critical emergency. We are no advocates of a fruitless Faith and a lifeless Orthodoxy. We confess that we,—the Clergy and Laity of the Church of England,—have been very remiss in the discharge of our own duty; we have neglected to uphold and extend the Diaconate which the Holy Spirit

<sup>8</sup> "Nothing is so great a stumbling-block to learners (says Theophyl. on St. John xvii. 22) as the disagreement of their teachers; for how will any be persuaded to follow those who lead different ways?"

<sup>9</sup> Ezek. xiii. 10.

instituted by the hands of the Apostles, when the *number of the Disciples was multiplied*. We have deserted the Field in which we ought to have laboured; we have left it to be occupied by others, and consequently we hold ourselves chargeable in great measure with the defects and irregularities of their agency. We would therefore confess our sins and amend our ways. We would endeavour, by God's grace, to supply our defects, and would aid others in supplying theirs.

Let us then all be united with one heart and one hand in this holy work. Let us all endeavour to promote it. We need a race of St. Stephens. Many among those to whom we refer, our Scripture Readers and City Missionaries, are animated with his spirit. Many there are who for the love of Christ would imitate him. Many like St. Matthew would willingly quit their ledgers for the Gospel, and arise from their seats of custom to preach Christ<sup>1</sup>. Many like St. Luke, from being Physicians of the body, might become *beloved Physicians* of the soul<sup>2</sup>. Many like St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose would leave the law court for the Church. Many like Clement of Alexandria and Origen would be willing to unite the work of the Christian Ministry with that of the Schoolmaster<sup>3</sup> and the Catechist. Many also, who have

<sup>1</sup> Mark ii. 14. Luke v. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Col. iv. 14.

<sup>3</sup> It has been sometimes said, that the experiment of "*Deacon-Schoolmasters*" has not been successful.

Perhaps, therefore, the Author may be allowed to refer to a case within his own knowledge, and which appears to him one that might have many parallels in various parts of the country.

He is speaking of a small hamlet or chapelry, in a rural district, which has never had a resident pastor in a parsonage-house, till the present time.

These advantages, it is hoped, have now been secured to it in perpetuity, by the following means.

A school-house was erected, in 1852-3, and a dwelling was



learnt to obey in the Camp or in the Fleet, and have thus been trained with salutary discipline, would re-

attached to it. Next, it became necessary to provide a pastor and a schoolmaster. The cure being small in value and population, it could hardly expect to have the benefit of the services of a resident Pastor; nor would there be sufficient pastoral employment to engage the undivided energies of one man; nor was there any house of residence, but the new dwelling annexed to the school-house.

The obvious course, under these circumstances, was to unite the office of Pastor with that of Schoolmaster, and to designate the dwelling annexed to the School-house, and erected for that purpose, as "the Parsonage."

A person was next to be found in whom those two offices were to be combined.

One who had been trained at St. Mark's College, and had served with credit in the capacity of Master in a large school, was highly recommended for that purpose, and was presented to the Bishop of the Diocese, and ordained by him to the Diaconate; and now discharges the duty of Deacon-Schoolmaster, and is resident in the hamlet, in the Parsonage annexed to the school.

The results of this experiment are satisfactory, as follows:

1. A resident Minister is provided for the hamlet.
2. He has enough professional employment, (not too much,) and that of the most beneficial kind for himself and his flock.
3. A financial advantage is obtained from this combination. The Deacon-Schoolmaster has, in addition to his stipend as Minister, whatever may accrue from annual subscriptions and school fees; he has also a house rent free.
4. The Farmers of the Parish, who have never sent their children to a National School conducted by a National Schoolmaster, send their children to the School superintended by a Master who is a Clergyman. And thus a class of children are brought under the pastoral care of the Church, who might probably otherwise be trained in semi-dissenting academies, and be trained in disaffection to the Church. These pay a higher fee than the other scholars, and thus aid in maintaining the School.
5. The School can derive no benefit from State Grants; but, on the other hand, its teaching is guarded against any dangers that may arise from external interference, and is kept in harmony with the teaching of the Church.

A similar experiment might be made in Towns with equal prospect

joyce to serve as good soldiers of the Prince of Peace in the Camp of Christ, and to labour earnestly as Christian Mariners in the bark of His Church.

These, and such as these, might do the work of St. Stephen. They might be his followers in the Diaconate. They cannot work miracles as he did; therefore they have all need of previous study, of labour, and wisdom, illumined by Divine grace<sup>4</sup>. Let then these,

of success. A Parochial School might be established, one department of it being for the sons of tradesmen and higher class of mechanics, who (as Mr. Woodard's efforts show) are very ready to commit their children to the care of the Clergy for education,—and it might be placed under the charge of three or four Deacon-Schoolmasters, who might assist in the ministry of the Church (without the labour of preparing sermons), and in visiting the poor and sick of the district, with many of whom they would have already formed some connexion of a pastoral and friendly kind through their children placed at the School.

The endowment of the School would be provided for by the School fees, collections at the offertory, and annual subscriptions and donations.

The office of Parish Clerk might also be filled by a Deacon, and afford some endowment for one. As Bishop Gibson observes, p. 150, "*Diaconus non ad sacerdotium sed ad ministerium ordinatur;*" and "anciently the Deacon officiated under the Presbyter in saying responses, and repeating Confession, Creed, and Lord's Prayer after him, and in such other duties of the Church as now properly belong to our Parish Clerks; and were heretofore real Clerks in England and elsewhere."

<sup>4</sup> By the laws of the Church of England a person may be admitted as Deacon "whom the Bishop knows, either by himself or sufficient testimony, to be a man of virtuous conversation; and finds after he has diligently examined him to be learned in the Latin tongue and sufficiently instructed in Holy Scripture; and none shall be made deacons under the age of twenty-three years at least, nor unless he subscribe the Thirty-nine Articles, and be able to confirm them by Scripture." 3 and 4 Ed. VI., 13 and 14 Car. II. 13 Eliz. cap. 12. Can. 34. Gibson, Codex, p. 146.

and such as these, be trained in Colleges, if requisite, for that purpose<sup>5</sup>. Let them be proved, examined, ordained, and sent by the Successors of the Apostles, to perform the office of Deacons,—to be vigilant and active in the ministrations of the Church to the poor, the sick, and the aged, and so by deeds of mercy and love to the body win a readier way for the work of Christ on the soul. Let them be sent to seek out children for baptism; to teach their Parents the difference—the essential and eternal difference—between the Civil Registration of a Birth and the Holy Sacrament of Baptism; to find them Sponsors; to baptize them; to catechize them; to bring them to Confirmation; to speak often to young men and young women concerning the dignity, beauty, and sanctity of Holy Matrimony, that it may not be degraded and desecrated into a civil contract and secular bargain enrolled in municipal Registers, but be written in the records of heaven; to organize Schools and Benefit Clubs and Friendly Societies, and to hallow them by the infusion of religious principles; to be happy mediums of communication and affectionate intercourse between the Clergy and Laity, as partaking in the functions of both, and as sharing in the sympathies of all; to bring the wandering sheep to the fold of the Church; to be missionary Pioneers to the Priesthood, who by their aid may be relieved from secular duties, and have more time to devote to meditation and study and prayer, and other spiritual exercises, public and private, for the better regulation and government of the Parochial body, and for the general superintendence and guidance of the whole—to be pastoral

<sup>5</sup> The Funds now contributed for Scripture Readers, &c., would go far to assist in the maintenance of an equal number of *Deacons*. Many, it may be hoped, of independent means, would engage in the work as a labour of love.

purveyors of the Church. Let them be holy to the Lord in their own eyes and in those of the people, because admitted to stand at His Altar and to take part in the Administration of the Holy Communion, and therefore doing all their works with religious reverence, in a sense of a solemn and awful responsibility to Him, Whose ministers they are. Let them go forth into our vast cities, bearing in their hands—not different doctrines—but the same Scriptures, the same Creeds, the same Book of Common Prayer; let them all be united in Christ as one man. Then we may hope for a new era in England; then we may trust, that with God's blessing on their endeavours, *the number of the disciples would be multiplied, and the Word of God increased, and many be obedient to the faith.*

## SERMON XXXVIII.

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### TITHES.

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1 TIM. v. 17.

“ *Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine* <sup>1</sup>.”

ST. PAUL is here giving charge to the Bishop of Ephesus concerning the government of the Church. He first speaks of his episcopal duties in ascertaining the qualifications of those who presented themselves for Ordination; and he then proceeds to lay down rules with regard to their Maintenance. *Let the Elders—Presbyters or Priests—who rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.* That is, “Let it be thy care to teach and provide, that they receive a liberal maintenance, an ample remuneration;” for such is the meaning of *honour* in this place, as has been shewn by the best Expositors<sup>2</sup>, and is evident from the Apostle’s words in the sequel, where he founds this duty on a Divine command—*For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt*

<sup>1</sup> Preached on Sunday afternoon, June 25, 1854, with the omission of some portions as too long for delivery.

<sup>2</sup> *τιμῆ*, *pensio*, from *τιω*, *pendo*: Cp. Joseph Mede’s Works, Book i. Disc. xix. pp. 70—73, ed. 1677, a very valuable Essay; and Dr. Barrow, Sermon. xii. p. 177, ed. 1683, a Consecration Sermon.

not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn—a passage cited also by him on another occasion<sup>3</sup> for the same purpose—and, the *labourer is worthy of his reward*<sup>4</sup>.

To the same effect the Holy Spirit speaks by the mouth of the Apostle in another place: *Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth, in all good things*<sup>5</sup>; that is, Let every Christian contribute a portion of the good things of this world that God gives him, for the maintenance of Christ's Ministers; and he declares that evasions of this command are frauds upon God, and will be punished by Him hereafter—"Be not deceived, *God is not mocked, whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap*<sup>6</sup>." And he further teaches, that a no less liberal maintenance is due by divine right to God's Ministers under the *Gospel* than that which He Himself provided for them under the *Law*. *Do ye not know, he says, that they which minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple; and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Do ye not know, that is, that the Levitical Ministry is endowed with Tithes and Offerings which God Himself has given them, and which He in their person receives of His people? Even so, adds the Apostle, hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel*<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Lev. xix. 13. Deut. xxiv. 14. Matt. x. 10. Luke x. 7.

<sup>5</sup> Gal. vi. 6. St. Paul was content at certain times and in certain places to waive his own claim to ministerial maintenance, and to labour with his own hands, for the sake of silencing all objections of self-interest, and for the better propagation of the Gospel in the first planting of it, and perhaps for the purpose of asserting the ministerial right to maintenance with more force: and for the sake of the Church in all future ages he takes good care to affirm that right which he did not always use in his own person (2 Thess. iii. 8, 9. 1 Thess. ii. 6. 1 Cor. ix. 4. 6. 12).

<sup>6</sup> Gal. vi. 7.

<sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14.

I. Thus then you see, my brethren, that every one among you is bound to devote some portion of his substance to Almighty God, for the maintenance of the Ministry, in order that His worship may be duly celebrated, His Word freely preached, His Sacraments rightly administered, and the sheep of His pasture guided and fed, for whom Christ died. And that this portion may not be parsimonious and niggardly, but adequate and ample, is evident from a consideration of God's glorious attributes, to Whom this offering is made, and Who is the Sole Author and Giver of all that we have to offer, and of all that we hope to enjoy, and whose Service and Worship is the noblest end and highest aim of our being; and from the blessings promised in earth and heaven to those who consecrate their worldly substance by dedicating a portion of it to God, and from the express declarations of the Holy Spirit—Let the *elders* that rule *well* be *counted worthy of double honour*<sup>8</sup>; and from His divine edict, that the provision—which we know to have been bountiful<sup>9</sup>—that was made by God's own command

<sup>8</sup> 1 Tim. v. 17.

<sup>9</sup> The tribe of Levi was enlisted by God in His own service, in lieu of the first-born of all the people of Israel (Num. iii. 12. 45; viii. 16). And to the Levites He assigned *the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree*; it is the Lord's, it is holy to the Lord, and to be given to the Levites (Lev. xxvii. 30). And hence the Apostle to the Hebrews says, "The sons of Levi, who received the office of the Priesthood, have a *commandment to take tithes of the People according to the Law*" (Heb. vii. 5).

The Levites were also endowed with the first-born of cattle (Num. xviii. 6), and with the price of the first-born of men, and with the first-fruits of all (Num. xviii. 12. 18; xviii. 14); and with a portion of meat offerings, sin offerings, thank offerings, wave offerings, and free-will offerings (Num. xviii. Lev. vi. 16; vii. 6. 12. 14. 31; xxiii. 10. 17. 19; xxiv. 9). Add to this the shewbread, and the oblations at the three great yearly festivals, where none might

for His Ministry under the Law, is to be regarded as an example for His people to follow in the maintenance to be supplied by them for His Ministry under the Gospel<sup>o</sup>.

II. A question here arises :

*What* portion of your substance is due to God for the maintenance of His Ministry ?

Some, you are aware, affirm that the *same* proportion which was due by Divine appointment under the Law, is still due by the same appointment under the Gospel ; and that it is no less the duty of Christians to set apart a *tenth* of their *substance*, than it is to devote a *seventh* part of their *time*, to the service of God.

appear empty (Deut. xvi. 16). Over and above was granted to them a Glebe and a Dwelling ; eight-and-forty Cities with their Suburbs, in all the tribes of Israel (Num. xxxv. 1—3. Josh. xxi. 2—4). And though in number the Levites amounted only to about a hundred and eighty-seventh part of the people (Prideaux on Tithes, 76. 84—99), yet the lands assigned to them equalled a thirtieth part of the territory of Canaan. The Most High God was pleased to guard these endowments with the most solemn warnings. "Take heed," He said, "that thou forsake not the Levite so long as thou shalt live upon the earth " (Deut. xii. 19); and any encroachment upon their revenues was declared by Him to be sacrilege, and to entail with it a curse. He represented the Levitical revenues as *His own*. He was their inheritance (Num. xviii. 20. Deut. x. 9 ; xviii. 2. Josh. xiii. 14. 32. Ezek. xliv. 28). "Will a man rob God?" He says by the prophet Malachi (iii. 8, 9), "Yet ye have robbed *Me*. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee ? *In tithes and offerings*. Ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have robbed *Me*, even this whole Nation."

<sup>10</sup> Hooker vii. xxiii. 6, says, "That if such provision be possible to be made, the Christian Clergy ought not to be inferior unto the Jewish, what sounder proof than the Apostle's own argument (1 Cor. ix. 13. 1 Tim. v. 17)?" and concerning the latter text Hooker adds, "I know not whether it be sound to interpret the Apostle otherwise than that whereas he judgeth the presbyters who rule well to be worthy of *double honour*, he means double that which the Priests of the Law received."



This opinion has been maintained by high authorities, appealing to the New Testament.

Some of the greatest writers of ancient Christendom, such as St. Irenæus<sup>1</sup>, Origen, St. Hilary, St. Chrysostom, St. Jerome, and St. Augustine, have been cited as inculcating this doctrine. And among our own writers it may suffice to name Lord Bacon, who says, "God demandeth a *tenth* of our *substance*, and a *seventh* of our *time*."<sup>2</sup>

But however this may be, we are bound to affirm that the proportion in question, *viz.* a Tenth, even if not of Divine *Right*, is certainly of Divine *Origin*; it is a Divine precedent embodied in the Divine Law, given to God's own people, not for a particular purpose of local or transitory concern, but for one of universal and permanent importance and necessity, *viz.* the maintenance of His ministry; that it is even antecedent to the Law, as may be seen in the history of Abraham and Melchizedec, the type of the Christian Priesthood<sup>3</sup>; that it seems to have descended from heaven, and to have been graven on men's hearts by the finger of God, and on the soil of the earth itself. And such a precedent as this—so ancient and venerable, so sacred and divine—is not lightly to be thrown aside, but is to be revered and cherished almost as a primæval oracle issuing from the Throne of God.

III. We are also obliged to add, that, *when* this portion—namely a Tenth—*has* once been set apart for

<sup>1</sup> S. Iren. iv. 27. 34. Origen in Num. Hom. xi. S. Hilary in Matt. xxiv. and others cited by Dean Prideaux on Tithes, pp. 143, 144, ed. Norwich, 1710. C. Leslie on Tithes, chap. x. Perhaps more stress has been sometimes laid on some of these quotations than they can fairly be made to bear. See Bp. Barlow's remarks, Remains, p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> Advancement of Learning, p. 251.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. xiv. 20. Heb. vii. 9.

this sacred purpose by the public will of a Nation, when this precedent, derived from God's own practice, has been embodied in a Nation's Code; when a Tithe of the Land's produce has once by the National Voice been dedicated to Him, and laid by the Nation's hand on His holy Altar, as, my beloved brethren, *has been done* in our own Country<sup>4</sup> with the most solemn Vows, registered in heaven—then we may say, it is almost a superfluous thing to debate<sup>5</sup>, whether Tithes are due by Divine Right or no? The question, the only question that remains to be considered, is,—Whether, having made this dedication of a specific portion of our substance to God, we can revoke the gift; whether we can take from off the Altar what our own hands have laid upon it; whether we can curtail the gift; whether we can appropriate it to ourselves and to secular uses, without incurring something like the guilt of Ananias and Sapphira, and without hearing from God's own lips that terrible sentence; “Ye have *robbed Me*. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed *Thee*? . . . In *Tithes* and *offerings*”<sup>6</sup>.

IV. Let us consider these statements, in reference to ourselves and to the subject now before us—the means of Religious Restoration. The duty which is enforced by the Apostle on all Christians does not seem to be generally regarded with that respectful attention, and to be performed with that ready obedience, which is due to all the commands of God. On this account it may well claim our consideration. And many circumstances concur in giving it a special importance in our own age and country. At the present time, and particularly in the present year, we hear of various

<sup>4</sup> See the documents in Dean Prideaux on Tithes, pp. 167, 168, 172—197.

<sup>5</sup> See Hooker v. lxxix. 12.

<sup>6</sup> Mal. iii. 8, 9.

designs for relieving the indigence of the Clergy<sup>7</sup>. We are reminded, that by recent legislative enactments, Pluralities have been almost abolished<sup>8</sup>, and that thus the only professional subsistence remaining for a large number of our Clergy, will be that pitiful pittance which they may derive from one of those numerous ill-endowed Cures, that already exist, and which have been lately much multiplied among us, and are in course of further multiplication by the operation of recent enactments<sup>9</sup>. Already a large number of the Clergy are in straitened circumstances, and we have a sad prospect before us of more general impoverishment.

The evils which will thence arise, and have, in part, arisen, are great and manifold.

We speak not here of *private* distresses of pastoral homes; of poverty, sickness, sorrow, famine, broken hopes, and broken hearts, the widows' and orphans' tears. Let us draw a veil over them. Let us speak of *public* calamities; the mind of the Pastor harassed and distracted by worldly anxieties; his efficiency impaired; the service of God dishonoured, His worship

<sup>7</sup> "Bicentenary Festival of the Sons of the Clergy," &c.

<sup>8</sup> By 13 & 14 Vic. c. 94, sec. 19, and 13 & 14 Vic. c. 98.

<sup>9</sup> A return of the number and value of benefices in England and Wales was presented to Parliament by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in the year 1835, from which it appeared that the total number of parishes was 10,478, and of benefices below 150*l.* per annum 3528; below 300*l.* per annum, 6861. Between the year 1830 and the present date, more than 2000 benefices appear to have been created, varying in value from the mere interest of 1000*l.*, invested as an endowment fund, for the most part, with the Governors of the Bounty of Queen Anne, to 150*l.* per annum, assigned under the provisions of an Act of Parliament, commonly called Sir Robert Peel's Act, for the subdivision of large parishes. And the number of Assistant Curates at present labouring in England and Wales, with stipends varying from below 50*l.* up to 150*l.* per annum, exceeds 4267.

slighted, the ministerial name discredited, the poor of Christ neglected, parochial Charities languishing, reverence for Religion on the wane, the learning of the Priesthood declining through want of books and means of study and encouragements to pursue it,—and all this at a time when a learned Priesthood is greatly needed to stay the spreading plague of Indifference, Scepticism, Socialism, and Superstition: and many of the Clergy tempted to regard themselves as injured by those to whom they looked for comfort and defence; and therefore wounded in spirit by disappointment, and smarting under a sense of wrong: some of them, it may be, tempted to seek for advancement by flattering popular errors and by sacrificing unpopular truths; others of a different temperament betrayed into feelings of sullen moodiness and anti-social discontent—repulsed from society by fear of penury, and constrained to isolate themselves in almost a monastic solitude, and there brooding in silence over their own injuries, and driven to look for consolation in exaggerated notions of what they may regard as their only privilege left, their own ministerial functions and their own sacerdotal dignity.

Such a state of things will be deeply to be deplored in spiritual respects, and it is also fraught with civil dangers. The Clergy are, or ought to be, the national Teachers of Order, Loyalty and Patriotism. But when their social position is debased, when they suffer from pangs which touch them to the quick, as Husbands, Fathers, Citizens and Men, then, whatever might be hoped, it can hardly be expected, that with spirits broken, health shattered and influence impaired, they will render that service to their Country which may soon be needed by the exigencies of the times<sup>1</sup>. Heaven

<sup>1</sup> We know what the civil consequences of clerical pauperism were in former times, *e. g.* in 1635. “My Lord the Bishop of

grant that *we* in *this* land may never see what, from such causes as these, *other* nations have been constrained to see, a Clergy leagued with Democracy, and changed into Preachers of Revolution!

V. The private charitable Societies to which we have referred, have been instituted for the purpose of mitigating these evils.

We have recently had Festivals celebrated in our Halls, we have had Sermons preached in our Churches, in behalf of an indigent Clergy. From the funds thence collected pensions are granted to Widows and Orphans of some, and relief is administered to others, disabled by sickness. Thanks to those merciful men who take part in this work of Charity. May God bless them for it, and return it into their bosoms a hundredfold in this world and the next! But you need not be told, my brethren, that the efforts of these private Societies are wholly inadequate; that they are only slight palliatives of a great and growing evil. And surely it is no small evil in itself, no little shame, that the Clergy should thus be put forward as Mendicants in the eye of the Nation. It is a lamentable thing—a thing ill-pleasing in the sight of God and man—that the Clergy of England, they whom our Laws call the first of the three estates<sup>2</sup> of the Realm, of this great and wealthy nation, they who are no other than God's own Receivers and Usufructuaries<sup>3</sup>,

Gloucester informs me that the country is full of Improvements, which makes the Ministers poor, and their Poverty makes them fall upon popular and factious courses." Archbishop Laud's Account of his Province, Troubles, &c. i. p. 538.

<sup>2</sup> Harmer on Burnet's History, p. 73. Hence the Prayer Book (in the Office for the Fifth of November) speaks of "the King and the Three Estates;" the Crown is *now* sometimes spoken of as one of the Three Estates, instead of Supreme over them.

<sup>3</sup> Hooker v. lxxix. 11—13.

should, after their long-tried services to their country, be reduced to stand as beggars by the wayside, like the veteran warrior of the East, neglected in his old age, after his many victories, by a haughty master and ungrateful people, and with head bare, and hoary beard, and leaning on his staff, amid the trophies of his conquests, breathing out a pitiful prayer—" *Date obolum Belisario.*"

The evils just described are of too great magnitude for private Associations. They require the energies of every one among us, and of the nation at large. And in endeavouring to remove them we must go to the root of the evil—we must resort to first principles, as laid down in Scripture, and embodied in the Laws of our Country.

The solemn commands of Almighty God in Holy Writ upon this subject, have already been recited.

VI. Let us now proceed to consider it in reference to ourselves; and with this view let us trace the history of Religious Endowments in England; and then we may determine with accuracy what are the present duties of the Nation and Individuals in this great and sacred concern.

The English word *Parish* (derived from the Greek term for a neighbourhood of dwellings<sup>4</sup>) signified in the earliest ages of Christianity *not* what we *now* call a Parish, *but* what we term a *Diocese*, that is, an ecclesiastical precinct governed by a *Bishop*, whose seat or See was in the principal city in the district; and hence it was that, Christianity being sooner planted in *cities* than in *rural places*, those who were not yet converted were called *pagans*<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> *παροικία.*

<sup>5</sup> *Pagani* (or villagers).

For about<sup>6</sup> six centuries after Christ the cure of the souls in the Paroikia was in the Bishop, who was regarded as a centre of unity, and the Cathedral Church in the City was the mother Church of the District. And, as in the Acts of the Apostles it is said that the alms of the faithful were *laid at the Apostles' feet*<sup>7</sup>, so, for many generations, the Parochial Endowments were at the disposition of the Bishop, who bestowed them partly upon his own uses<sup>8</sup>, partly in the maintenance of his Clergy, partly in the sustentation of the fabric and provision for the service of the Cathedral, and partly in the exercise of hospitality and the relief of the sick and needy. This was the state of things for about six centuries after Christ; and *that* age may be called the missionary age of the Church.

In course of time Christianity extended itself from Cathedral cities into rural villages. Paganism receded before it, Churches were multiplied with resident Pastors. These Churches were consecrated by the Bishop, and their Pastors were bound by a vow of obedience to him; and thus the Bishop was still the Centre of unity, and these Churches were like Chapels of Ease to the Cathedral. But, from the circumstances of the case, the relation of the Bishop to the Clergy, and through them to their flocks, became less intimate. The endowments of these village Churches and Chapelries were settled on their resident Incumbents by the donation of the Lay Patrons, who had built these rural oratories for the worship of God

<sup>6</sup> Cp. Hooker, v. lxxx. 2. Bp. Stillingfleet on Parochial Clergy, p. 88, &c, in *Eccl. Cases*, Vol. i. ed. Lond. 1702.

<sup>7</sup> Acts iv. 22.

<sup>8</sup> This is not to be confounded with the quadripartite division of *Tithes*, which belongs to a later date, and does not appear to have prevailed in this country. See Archdeacon Hale's valuable Essay on that subject, Lond. 1832.

and for the spiritual welfare of themselves and of their retainers, and who dedicated a tenth of the produce of the soil to Almighty God for these purposes.

These gifts were settled in perpetuity by the Laws of the Land. Tithes were given to God and His Ministry, and were dedicated to that purpose for ever, first in the part of England called Mercia (Warwickshire, Worcester, Hereford) at the end of the eighth century<sup>9</sup>, and about sixty years afterwards, by the general voice of the Nation, through the whole extent of the land<sup>1</sup>.

Hence it came to pass that the word *Paroikia*, which had originally designated a *Diocese*, came now to signify a subordinate district, assigned to a resident Presbyter—in short, a *Parish*<sup>2</sup>.

It would have been a happy thing for England, if this system had been fully developed, and had never been disturbed, and if all the ecclesiastical Endowments of each several Parish had been secured for ever to the maintenance of Religion within the territorial district from which they accrued.

But this was not the case.

With the growth of the Papal power, Monastic Houses arose, and some of the Lords of the soil were led to believe, that they could not render a greater service to Religion and their own souls, than by endowing those Houses with Parochial Tithes and Offerings. They were also induced to suppose, that, in consideration of

<sup>9</sup> By the laws of King Offa, A.D. 794.

<sup>1</sup> By the laws of Ethelwolf, A.D. 854 and 855, with the free consent of all the nobles of England. See the Authorities in Leslie on Tithes, ch. xi., in Prideaux, pp. 167, 168. 172—197. 201.

<sup>2</sup> The division of England into Parishes took place in the seventh century, in the time of Honorius, Archbishop of Canterbury, circ. A. D. 636. See in Bp. Barlow, Remains, p. 170,—a valuable letter on Appropriations, &c.



these Endowments, the Monasteries to whom they were given would provide adequately for the maintenance of worship and the cure of souls in those Parishes from which the Endowments arose.

Doubtless in many cases the covenant was made in good faith on both sides, but its principle was vicious, and it prepared the way for the abuses introduced in the second period, which now claims our attention; the period between the Norman Conquest and the Dissolution of Monasteries.

VII. In the earlier part of this period the greater Prelates of the Church were for the most part of Norman extraction, and had been educated in Monastic Houses, and were favourable to the Monastic System. But the Ministers of the Parish Churches, especially the poorer, were for the more part of Saxon or British race, and their temporal condition was much impaired by the Conquest.

The Norman Prelates, acting under the sanction, and supported by the power, of Rome, aided the Monastic Orders in absorbing into their convents the Parochial Tithes; and through this process of absorption a very slender pittance was left to the Parochial Minister; so that, within three hundred years after the Conquest, more than a third part of the Benefices of England<sup>3</sup> had become *appropriated*, as it is called, to Religious Houses; in other words, their Tithes were diverted from their proper uses, and applied to the aggrandizement of Monastic Orders, who set at nought the command of the Holy Spirit speaking by St. Paul, *Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.*

<sup>3</sup> See Kennett on Vicarages, p. 25, ed. Lond. 1704. Prideaux, pp. 292, 293. 296.

Thus then our Church and Nation were oppressed by a combination of two foreign powers: the one civil, the other ecclesiastical; the one that of the Norman Conquerors, the other that of the Roman See.

It ought to be recorded to the honour of two great English prelates in the thirteenth century, Robert Grossthead, Bishop of Lincoln, and John Peckham, Archbishop of Canterbury<sup>4</sup>, that they endeavoured to check the evil of Appropriations, and to constrain the religious Corporations which held them to provide adequate maintenance for the Parochial Clergy of their impropriate benefices<sup>5</sup>.

In the year 1392 (being the fifteenth of King Richard II.<sup>6</sup>), the abuse of Appropriations had risen to such a height, that the Commons of England made a public remonstrance in Parliament against them, setting forth (to cite their words) that "Benefices having cure of souls were instituted for the honour of God, the health of the Founders, the government and relief of the Parishioners, and the promotion of the Clergy." "Notwithstanding this," they add, "the Religious Orders, through the provision of the Pope, mischievously appropriate the said benefices, and throw down the houses of the same, and take away Divine Service, Hospitality and other Works of Charity, and do bar the Clergy from promotion, and carry away the treasure of the realm to the Court of Rome, in offence to God, confusion of their Souls, grievous desolation

<sup>4</sup> Kennett, pp. 46—52. 66—69.

<sup>5</sup> As to this power supposed by some to be still vested in the Diocesan, see 15 Rich. II. c. 6, 4 Hen. IV. c. 12, and other Statutes quoted in Law's Eccl. Stat. i. p. 157; Kennett, pp. 52—54; and Abp. Laud's Letter in Appendix to Kennett, p. 42; and particularly the facts and arguments in Dr. Ryves' Poor Vicar's Plea, Lond. 1704. Bishop Gibson has some important remarks on this point, Codex, pp. 722, 3, ed. Oxf. 1761.

<sup>6</sup> Rot. Parl. 15 Rich. II.

of their country and the Parishioners, final destruction of the Clergy, great impoverishment of the Kingdom, and ruin of the Church of England." Accordingly, it was enacted by the Legislature of that period that no new appropriation should take place, without an assignment of a competent sum for charitable uses, and for the sustenance of the Vicar.

Still the evil remained; and in the year 1414, the University of Oxford, being required by King Henry the Fifth at his accession to lay before him such matters as needed to be rectified in Convocation, thus speaks <sup>7</sup> :

"The manifold Appropriation of Churches has been obtained by divers subtle and sinister suggestions, particularly for the tables of Bishops, and also for Monasteries already amply endowed. Whence arises the destitution of Parishes, the suppression of hospitable relief to the Poor, and, what is still more grievous, the destruction of souls. Therefore let existing Appropriations be revoked; and none be permitted for the future."

Such were the warnings pronounced by the Parliament and Universities of England against Appropriations.

Happy would it have been for the Church and Realm,—happy would it have been for the Monastic Orders themselves,—if these warnings had been heard! But the *god of this world had blinded their eyes*, they were ensnared by the *love of money, the root of all evil*<sup>8</sup>, and could not see the things *that belonged to their peace*.

The day of retribution was at hand.

<sup>7</sup> Art. XX. de Appropriatione Ecclesiarum. See the original in Kennett, p. 63, and Wake's State of the Church, Append. Num. cxix.

<sup>8</sup> 1 Tim. vi. 10.

In the twenty-seventh year of King Henry VIII. (the year 1535), the Legislature<sup>9</sup> granted to the Crown all the smaller Monasteries, and five years after it gave the larger Abbeys, with their impropriate Tithes and Revenues, to be enjoyed by the Crown, and by any other persons or bodies politic by Letters Patent from the Crown.

Such was the chastisement inflicted on the Monastic Orders who had laid their hands on Tithes and Offerings.

It might reasonably have been hoped that the Crown and Parliament of England, which were then used as instruments in God's Hands for punishing the sacrilegious rapacity of the Monastic Orders, would have been warned by the fate of those on whom they executed retribution, and would have abhorred their sin, and have restored the Parochial Endowments to their proper uses, the maintenance of a Christian Ministry, and of God's Worship and Service in the Parishes whence they arose.

But alas ! this was not the case.

In some instances, indeed, these Endowments were employed in the erection of Bishopricks, the foundation of Colleges, and of other ecclesiastical Institutions<sup>1</sup>,

<sup>9</sup> 27 Hen. VIII. c. 28, and 31 Hen. VIII. c. 13, Law's Eccl. Stat. pp. 11. 17. Some historical remarks on these Acts, in reference to the Persons concerned in them, may be seen in Sir Henry Spelman's History of Sacrilege, chap. vii.

<sup>1</sup> The following remarks on Appropriations in *Ecclesiastical* hands are from Kennett on Improvements, Lond. 1704, p. 421.

"The appropriations that are held by *Ecclesiastical Bodies* and Persons ought not to be looked upon as equally invidious with those that are in Lay hands ; because many of them were original Endowments of Episcopal Sees and the Mother Churches in them ; many others were more lately given in exchange for Lands and other firm possessions ; and all of them are still employed to spiritual and pious uses. If any apology be wanting, it has been better

and so, in a secondary sense, might be said to be given to God; but for the most part they were applied to secular purposes. They were given to Nobles and Courtiers: and it appears that the annual sum of a hundred thousand pounds was then diverted from Parochial uses, and that about two hundred and sixty persons of the Laity<sup>2</sup> became then Impropriators of Tithes. And on the whole, out of 10,540 Benefices in England and Wales, as many as 2552<sup>3</sup>, with an annual value of 731,535*l.*, are now in Lay Hands.

Thus, then, we have seen, that together with the Dissolution of Monasteries arose Lay Impropriations, an evil<sup>4</sup> almost unknown in England before that time.

made by a worthy knight\* in these words that are proper to this discourse. ‘Haply also Lay Appropriaries comfort themselves that they may hold these things by example of Colleges, Deans and Chapters, Bishops of the land, and of divers of our late Kings and Princes. Before I speak to this point, I take it by protestation, that I have no heart to make an apology for it. For I wish that every man may drink the water of his own well, eat the milk of his own flock, and live by the fruit of his own vineyard: I mean, that every member might attract no other nutriment but that which is proper to itself. Yet are they greatly deceived that draw any juice of encouragement from these examples. For all these are either the seminaries of the Church, or the Fathers and Nurses of the Church: all de familia Ecclesia, and consequently belonging to the care of the Church, and ought therefore to be sustained by it.’”

<sup>2</sup> See the Authorities in Dr. Isaac Basire’s Work on Sacrilege, Lond. 1668, pp. 118, 119. Whence it appears that the then annual value of what was bestowed in this manner was 100,000*l.* (Kennett, p. 169). It is calculated at 126,000*l.* by Hooker, vii. xxiv. 25.

<sup>3</sup> Tables at end of Report of Commissioners appointed to enquire into Ecclesiastical Revenues, 1833, and Report of Tithe Commissioners.

<sup>4</sup> There were some instances of Lay infeoffments of Tithes in earlier times. See Prideaux, pp. 160. 292. 302, and Kennett, p. 17.

\* Sir Henry Spelman *de non temerandis Ecclesiis*, Sect. 17.

And it has been often urged against the Reformation and the Reformers, that they aggravated a great abuse, instead of removing it.

But this charge is unjust ; the introduction of Lay Impropriations was no act of Protestants opposed to Papists : but it was an act of lovers of money opposed to lovers of God.

The Parliament which gave the Improprate Tithes to Henry, was not a Protestant Parliament. Henry the Eighth, who received the Tithes and gave them to his favourites, was not a Protestant King<sup>5</sup>. Many Protestants were burnt for their religion by his laws ; and many good men who were Protestants, in his reign, and in those of his children, Edward and Elizabeth, such as Archbishops Cranmer<sup>6</sup>, Grindall, and

<sup>5</sup> See the authorities cited above in " Occasional Discourses on the Church of Ireland," p. 175.

<sup>6</sup> Kennett, pp. 132—136. See particularly the noble Speech of Abp. Whitgift to Queen Elizabeth, in Kennett's Appendix, Num. viii. pp. 17—20. The following paragraphs are from it :

" Though I pretend not to prophesy, yet I beg posterity to take notice of what is already become visible in many families, ' that Church-land added to an ancient and just inheritance, hath proved like a moth fretting a garment, and secretly consumed both ; or, like the eagle that stole a coal from the altar, and thereby set her nest on fire, which consumed both her young eagles and herself that stole it.' And, though I shall forbear to speak reproachfully of your father, yet I beg you to take notice that a part of the Church's rights, added to the vast treasure left him by his father, hath been conceived to bring an unavoidable consumption upon both, notwithstanding all his diligence to preserve them. And consider that after the violation of those laws, to which he had sworn in Magna Charta, God did so far deny him his restraining grace that, as King Saul, after he was forsaken of God, fell from one sin to another, so he, till at last he fell into greater sins than I am willing to mention. Madam, Religion is the foundation and cement of human society : and when they that serve at God's altar shall be exposed to poverty, then Religion itself will be exposed to scorn, and become contemptible, as you may already observe it to be in too many poor

Whitgift, and Bishops Latimer and Hooper, protested boldly against these unhappy acts. And when his daughter, Queen Mary—to her honour be it spoken—desired to restore these Improprate Tithes to their Parishes, her Popish Nobles and Gentry, who had been enriched with the spoils of the Church and of the Poor, thwarted her wishes, and induced her to intercede with Cardinal Pole that he would prevail on the Pope to confirm them in their ill-gotten wealth<sup>7</sup>. The Pope granted the request; and thus the hand of Rome riveted the chain which she was the first to forge.

It would, indeed, be a glorious work of genuine Protestantism to loose this chain,—not rudely and rashly, but with justice, gentleness, and love,—and to emancipate the Church and the People of England from the spiritual vassalage in which it enthrals them, and to give ease to the consciences of those who may be unwilling instruments of this spiritual bondage. The Nation, which nobly gave many millions for the liberation of Slaves, would act no less nobly in giving as largely for the liberation of Tithes.

VIII. We now enter the Third Period of our His-

Vicarages in this nation. And, therefore, as you are by a late act of parliament entrusted with a great power to preserve or waste the Churche's lands, yet dispose of them for Jesus' sake, as you have promised to men and vowed to God, that is, as the Donors intended. Let neither falsehood nor flattery beguile you to do otherwise; but put a stop to God's and the Levite's portion (I beseech you), and to the approaching ruin of His Church, as you expect comfort at the last great day; for kings must be judged. Pardon this affectionate plainness, my most dear Sovereign, and let me beg to be still continued in your favour, and the Lord still continue you in His."

<sup>7</sup> See Cardinal Pole's Letter IX. Kal. Jan. 1554; Gibson's Codex, pp. 35—37; and 1 & 2 Phil. and Mary, c. 8.

tory, the interval between the Dissolution of the Monasteries and the present day.

The first two of our Stuart Princes, James I. and Charles I., did something to mitigate the evils of Impropropriations in Scotland and Ireland; and similar designs were announced by authority<sup>8</sup> for abating them in this country, and pious and benevolent individuals pleaded and laboured in the same cause<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> See the authorities quoted in "Occasional Discourses on Church History in Ireland," pp. 251—258.

<sup>9</sup> Kennett, pp. 174—176. The celebrated John Selden, who is well known to have never been too favourably affected to the Clergy and Church of England, speaks thus on this subject. "I doubt not but that every good man wishes that at the Dissolution of Monasteries the lands and impropropriated tythes, possessed by them,—that is, things sacred to the service of God,—had been bestowed rather for the advancement of the Church, to a better maintenance of the Ministry, to the fostering of good arts, to the relief of the Poor, and other such good uses, than conferred with such prodigal dispensation on those who stood ready to devour what was sanctified." And this learned lawyer, referring to those Lay impropropriations, puts this question. "May that which either grant or prescription or other civil title once settled and so consecrated to God, although abused, be afterwards profaned to lay hands? It is (he adds) a gross error to suppose that if tythes are not due by divine right they may still be possessed with a good conscience by laymen\*."

To the same effect the University of Oxford declared in the year 1603 †. "It is originally unlawful, and clear contrary to their institution, for a layman to hold an impropropriation, which is a tythe. And the many and great spoils of the Church never prospered with them that got them, but were as rust to the rest of the silver and gold; or as a canker which fretted out themselves, their posterity and possessions."

And therefore the great Lord Strafford ‡, in the last instructions which he bequeathed as a legacy to his son a little before his death, uses these memorable and prophetic words. "I foresee that Ruin

\* Selden's History of Tithes, Lond. 1618, pp. 471. 466.

† See Kennett, p. 179.

‡ Rushworth, Coll. Trial of T. Earl of Strafford, p. 763.



Nor must we forget the formation of a Society in the year 1628, for the redemption of Improprate Tithes, and for the restoration of them to pious uses.

It was evident from the admirable dispositions then generally manifested to promote this good design, that, if this Society had been legally constituted and sanctioned by competent authority, Civil and Ecclesiastical, and if instead of scattering, in a sectarian spirit, the Improprate Endowments which it purchased, it had restored them to sacred and charitable uses in those parishes from which they accrued<sup>1</sup>, it would have been enabled effectually to diminish, if not wholly to remove, the evils arising from Improprations, and so to effect a work highly pleasing to Almighty God, and to confer an inestimable and enduring benefit on the English Church and Nation<sup>2</sup>.

But, unhappily, the Society of these Feoffees, as they were called, was not regularly constituted, and acted in an illegal manner, and it was therefore dissolved, and so its good work was marred, and the

is like to come upon the revenues of the Church; and perhaps they may be shared among the Nobility and Gentry; but I charge thee never to meddle with any of it. For the curse of God will follow all them that meddle with such a thing."

<sup>1</sup> The "Tithe Redemption Trust" is a revival of the same design, on sounder principles, and is entitled to more support than it has as yet received.

<sup>2</sup> "It is incredible," says Fuller (Church Hist. Cent. xvii. B. xi.), "what large sums were advanced in a short time toward so laudable an employment." He thus speaks;

"There are in England of Parish Churches 9284 endowed with Glebe and Tithes. But of these, when these Feoffees entered on their works, 3845 were either appropriated to Bishops, Cathedrals, and Colleges, or improprated as Lay Fees to private persons. The redeeming or restoring the *latter* was these Feoffees' design; and it was verily believed that within Fifty years rather purchasers than money would have been wanting unto them, buying them generally at or under twelve years' valuation."

design fell to the ground ; and its fate has bequeathed to us an instructive warning on the necessity of *doing good well*.

The troubles which ensued in the Great Rebellion checked the work of Restoration. Yet it must not be forgotten that by an Ordinance of the Long Parliament in 1649, it was enacted that such quantity of the Improprate Tithes should be annexed to every Church as should make up the annual amount of every benefice to 100*l.* at least<sup>3</sup>, a considerable sum for those days. But the confusion of the times prevented the execution of this law.

In the interval between the Great Rebellion and the present day, one noble act of Religious Restoration shines forth with transcendent lustre. You will anticipate the mention of the princely munificence of an English Sovereign,—Queen Anne,—who commenced her reign with remitting the arrears due to the Crown from small Vicarages, and, in the year 1704, enlarged her pious Bounty by granting in perpetuity, with the unanimous concurrence of Parliament<sup>4</sup>, the whole revenue arising to the Crown from the first-fruits and tenths of Benefices<sup>5</sup>, for the augmentation of small Livings,—an act worthy of an English Sovereign, and productive of rich blessings in that and succeeding generations<sup>6</sup>!

<sup>3</sup> Ordinance for Preachers and Ministers, enacted June 8, 1649. This was more than an Enabling Act ; it not only empowered Impropriators, Lay and Ecclesiastical, to endow Vicarages with improprate tithes, without licence of Mortmain, to the annual amount of 100*l.*, but it declared that this sum was the minimum allowance, and that all benefices should be raised to that sum.

<sup>4</sup> By 5 Anne, cap. 24.

<sup>5</sup> Originally claimed by the Pope, and afterwards annexed to the Crown by Henry VIII. (26 Hen. VIII. c. 3.) See Bishop Barlow, Remains, p. 171, "On Pensions paid out of Church Livings."

<sup>6</sup> 2 & 3 Anne, c. 11. See Kennett on Vicarages, pp. 356—371,

A tribute of respect may also here be paid to the memory of our late revered Primate, Archbishop Howley, by whose exertions a Law was proposed and enacted, enabling Ecclesiastical persons and corporations to augment their impropriate Vicarages<sup>7</sup>,—a wise and beneficent measure attended with the best results. And we may thank Almighty God that this good example has now been followed by the legislative extension of similar powers to the Laity<sup>8</sup>, so that large and liberal facilities have now been given for this holy work of Restoration<sup>9</sup>.

IX. In the year 1835<sup>10</sup>, a royal Commission was issued for enquiring into Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenues,

and Appendix, p. 54, and the History of Queen Anne's Bounty by its respected Treasurer, Christopher Hodgson, Esq., Lond. 2nd edit. 1845.

<sup>7</sup> 1 & 2 Will. IV. c. 45. Law's Eccl. Statutes, i. p. 209.

<sup>8</sup> 13 & 14 Vic. c. 94, sec. 23, a provision procured at the instance of Lord John Manners, whereby great facilities are given to the restoration of Tithes to Parishes. It is no longer necessary to adopt the forms prescribed by the Statutes of Mortmain; a simple conveyance of the Tithes to the Incumbent is sufficient; and *Lay Tithes may be left by will to the Incumbent*. The author may be permitted to refer here to the language used in 1837 (*i. e.* some years *before* this latter Act was passed), by one of revered memory, who, after speaking of the Archbishop's Act, adds, "*That layman who shall introduce and shall succeed in carrying such a design through Parliament,*"—(*i. e.* one enabling the *lay* Impropricator to restore Tithes to Parishes)—"would entitle himself to a permanent name among the greatest benefactors to his country." The late Dr. Wordsworth's *Christian Institutes*, vol. iii. p. 414.

<sup>9</sup> The Clause of 13 & 14 Vic. c. 94, § 23, is as follows:—  
"And be it enacted, That the Owner or Proprietor of any Impropriation, Tithes, Portion of Tithes, or Rent-charge in lieu of Tithes, shall and may have Power to annex the same or any part thereof unto the Parsonage, Vicarage, or Curacy of the Parish Church or Chapel where the same lie or arise, or to settle the same in trust, for the benefit of such Parsonage, Vicarage, or Curacy, any Statute or Law whatsoever to the contrary thereof in any wise notwithstanding."

<sup>10</sup> Feb. 4, 1835.

with a view to a better provision for the cure of souls and for the residence of the Clergy on their benefices. And in pursuance of the Reports of that Commission, it was enacted that a large part of the revenues of Cathedral and Collegiate Churches should be paid over to a Central Board—the Ecclesiastical Commission—for the Endowment of Parochial Cures, especially in populous places<sup>1</sup>. Thus, for example, more than a half

<sup>1</sup> 3 & 4 Vic. c. 113. A few words may be said here on Improvements now belonging to Capitular Bodies. For my own part, I am disposed to believe that,—as “Judgment *begins* with the *house of God*,” the calamities which have lately befallen our Cathedral and Collegiate Churches may be due to God’s Anger against them for not having duly provided for His Ministry in the Parishes where they held Improvements Tithes. They have suffered as the Monasteries suffered, for a similar cause. And this may be a warning to some Lay Improvements. But to speak of the present. The 67th Section of the Act well provides (3 & 4 Vic. c. 113) that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, in dispensing the tithes transferred to them for the purposes of the Act (*i. e.* for the Spiritual welfare of populous places), shall have special regard to the spiritual wants of the parishes from which the tithes arise.

And as (by Sect. 50) all separate estates of Deans and Canons were to be vested in the Commissioners, so the duties and liabilities of appropriations formerly belonging to Deans and Canons, as corporations sole, have been or will be transferred to the Commissioners. Since also, by Sect. 66 of that Act, and by subsequent Orders of Council, the incomes of Deans and Canons are fixed within certain limits, and if there is any available surplus from Corporate Capitular revenues beyond those limits, it is to be paid over to the Commissioners for the uses of the Commission, it would seem that the general liability to augment small Benefices of which the Chapters have the Tithes is now in course of transfer to the Commission.

Similar observations apply in great measure to appropriations annexed to Bishoprics; and it must be remembered that Bishoprics were robbed of Manors and Freeholds, and compelled to receive Improvements for them. See Kennett, p. 150.

We learn with sorrow that Tithes have been sold by the Ecclesiastical Commission. See their Return to the House of Lords, 2 June, 1853.

It was a wise recommendation of the “Episcopal and Capitular

of the divisible revenues of this Collegiate Church have been withdrawn from their original destination, and assigned to those uses. And thus—and by the assignment of fixed stipends to the members of the Capitular body—the responsibility of augmenting its *smaller* appropriated Benefices has been transferred, or is in course of transfer, to other hands. And at the period when this Commission was appointed, it was confidently believed that, as soon as *Ecclesiastical* Corporations had made a large sacrifice of their own revenues for that purpose,—as far as they were competent to surrender them, — other means would not be wanting from other sources, public and private, for the adequate endowment of the parochial Ministry.

X. But here we are compelled to record, that, in the year 1836<sup>2</sup>, a fundamental alteration took place in the provision for the endowment of a Christian Ministry in England.

For a Thousand years, until that time, a Tenth of all produce, present or future, of land then cultivated or to be cultivated, had been dedicated to God for the maintenance of His ministry<sup>3</sup>.

The great characteristic of this ancient system, instituted by God Himself, was, that it possessed in itself an admirable principle of expansiveness and elasticity—a property of pliancy and flexibility accommodating and adjusting itself to the increasing wealth,

Revenue Commission," 1850, "that all leases of Tithes should be suffered to run out, and not be renewed except in special cases."

<sup>2</sup> By the Tithe Commutation Act, 6 & 7 Will. IV. c. 71, followed by 7 Will. IV. & 1 Vic. c. 69, and 1 & 2 Vic. c. 64, and 2 & 3 Vic. c. 32.

<sup>3</sup> Thus the English Nation had "incorporated and identified the estate of the Church with the mass of private property . . . and ordained that the provision for it might be as stable as the earth on which it stands."—Burke, Reflections on French Revolution.

and to the increasing spiritual needs, of the Nation, particularly of the Poor; so that, growing with the Nation's growth, and strengthened with its strength, it was like a holy influence infused into the Nation's wealth, animating, dignifying, pervading, spiritualizing, and sanctifying the whole, and consecrating it to God for His service, and the salvation of His people; and bringing down upon the Nation, on its Agriculture, its Commerce, its Science, its Arts, and Arms, a Divine benediction from the Great Giver of all; and inspiring it with hopes full of immortality, and breathing forth from the Nation's heart, and even from the ground itself, a song of perpetual praise, "*Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the power, for all that is in heaven and the earth is Thine: both riches and honour come of Thee; and of Thine own have we given Thee*<sup>4</sup>." "*The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof*<sup>5</sup>."

But, alas! many among us had grown weary of this principle; they thought that to be partakers with God in the fruits of his own earth was injurious to Agriculture, and unfavourable to human industry<sup>6</sup>! And, therefore, if we may venture so to speak, they would close their accounts and dissolve partnership with heaven.

To assuage their discontent, it was judged expedient to propose and enact that a Corn-rent of a certain quantity, never to be increased, but stereotyped for ever, should be made a substitute for the right of a tithe of produce *in all time*<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Chron. xxix. 11—14.

<sup>5</sup> Ps. xxiv. 1. 1 Cor. x. 26. 28.

<sup>6</sup> Paley's remarks on Tithes in his *Moral Philosophy*, ii. p. 407, chap. xi. (near the end), contain no argument against the system of tithes—but against its abuse.

<sup>7</sup> This, too, at a time when it was well known that "the produce of the British soil had been more than doubled in the previous seventy-

By this Commutation, the quantity of land in cultivation *at that particular time* was made the *limit* of the quantity of tithable land in *all future time*; and thus Almighty God was deprived of His share in land created by Himself, which, by the blessing of His good providence on the works of His own creatures, might be brought into cultivation after that particular time.

And, further, the quantity of tithable produce at *that particular time* was made the *limit* of tithable produce in *all time*. And thus He was excluded from His own portion in the fruits accruing thereafter from human industry, science, inventions, new modes of cultivation, new channels of communication by land and by water, and all other physical and artificial appliances which are His own gifts to man for the relief of man's estate, and for the promotion of His own glory<sup>8</sup>.

five years, and was then increasing from year to year at a still more rapid rate; and in that increase the Tithe-owners had hitherto shared, and were then sharing, and the numbers of the people were rapidly increasing," (they have been more than doubled in the last half century,) "and the demand for religious instruction was increasing rapidly too, and even the improved revenues of the Church were daily becoming more and more unequal to the demand." (Remarks on Commutation of Tithes, by Rev. R. Jones, Lond. 1836, p. 3.) This was the time chosen for making the "revenues of the Church stationary when nothing else was stayed." See also Remarks on Tithe Commutation, by Ralph Barnes, Esq., Lond. 1836, pp. 1—3.

<sup>8</sup> The following paragraphs on this subject are from a Charge delivered at the time by the Bishop of Exeter:—1836, p. 9.

"If it be said that the tithe-owner's interest is protected by the appointed corn-rents, thus making his income to vary with the variations of the times, I answer, that this gives no compensation whatever for his fair share in that augmentation of the produce of land, which shall be caused, not by any special and occasional employment of capital, but by the general advancement of agriculture as an art; by the discoveries of science, and the application of the results of these discoveries to the culture of the earth; by

In a word, must we not say, that the genial current of the gracious stream of God's bounties to man, which had flowed on in our country in a sacred and ever-widening course, for ten centuries, and was designed to irrigate and fertilize the dry places of our land with the living waters of the Gospel, and to make the *wilderness rejoice and blossom as the rose*<sup>9</sup>, was then suddenly checked and frozen; and that it now remains bound up, as it were, in the chains of winter? Oh! that the vernal breath of Mercy and the soft breezes of Love to God and man might one day melt and thaw it, and let it loose again, to flow freely as before!

XI. Let us sum up what has been said, and deduce from it the practical instruction that it suggests:—

All our substance, all our time, all our faculties and endowments are from God, and God alone; and they are held by us in trust from Him, to be improved to His honour and service. We are all God's tenants

the introduction of new articles of produce; by the opening out of new communications, and thus facilitating an increased and more profitable cultivation, without any proportionate increase of expediture. In all these common benefits, the boons of a gracious Providence to man, the owner of the soil has no special right which can justify the shutting out the owner of the tithe of produce from his proportionate share." See also p. 10.

"In the year 1792 the price of wheat was not materially different from that which it bears at present; yet the Rent of land has at least been doubled since that time, and so has the income of clerical preferments. If, therefore, this Act had passed in 1792, benefices would now only have half their present income, and if a similar process continues (and no good reason I apprehend can be assigned why it should not continue), it will follow that in a half century from the present time the relative condition of the Tithe-owner and of the Lord of the soil will be altered in the proportion of one half to the disadvantage of the former."

<sup>9</sup> Isa. xxxv. 1.



at will. And each of us will be called upon at the Great Day of reckoning to render an account of his stewardship, how he has used what God has lent him, and each of us will be rewarded or punished accordingly, for evermore.

It is God's will declared in His Word, that He should be known by all, and be worshipped by all. The knowledge and worship of God cannot be maintained without men, set apart for that purpose; and men cannot be maintained without means. Reason, therefore, shews that God's Ministers have a claim for maintenance, and God Himself in Scripture affirms it; and it is evident from His own law and practice in the Patriarchal and Levitical Dispensations, and from St. Paul's reasonings upon it, that this ministerial maintenance may not be meagre and miserable, but ought to be large and liberal, for the honour and glory of God, the beauty and dignity of religion, the refutation of error, and the propagation of truth, and the salvation of the souls of men.

We find also in our own history, that, at a very early period, the English Nation entered into a covenant with God, and dedicated a Tenth of the produce of its soil for the maintenance of His Ministry.

This covenant, it appears, has been infringed in various ways. First, under papal influence, by appropriations of Tithes to Monastic Houses; next, at the Dissolution of Monasteries, by the further sequestration of those Endowments, and by the transfer of them to Lay hands. And lastly, by more recent measures. And the divine Institution of Tithe has now been supplanted in many places by Pew Rents and Mortuary Fees and other precarious and unhappy devices. And consequently we have now before us a melancholy picture of ministerial poverty, and spiritual destitution.

XII. May we not, therefore,—must we not say,

that the English Nation now owes a heavy debt to Almighty God, and that she has reason to fear, that, unless she makes Restitution, He will exact His own with terrible arrears<sup>10</sup> ?

Are these my words? No. They are the words of some of our greatest and wisest men. "In my own opinion and sense," says Lord Bacon, "I must confess, let me speak it with reverence, that all the Parliaments since the 27th and 31st of Henry VIII., who gave away Impropriations from the Church, seem to me to stand in a sort obnoxious and obliged to God in conscience to do somewhat for the Church to restore her patrimony to a competency<sup>1</sup>."

And, says Lord Clarendon, "With what justice can that which the goodness and bounty of our Ancestors have directed to one use, be taken away and applied to another? And I confess I cannot apprehend how spoiling or defrauding the Church can be less sacrilege, by what authority soever men are qualified to commit it. And it is a weighty observation that they are in great error who rank sacrilege as a sin against the Eighth Commandment; for though he that committeth sacrilege, indirectly, and by consequence robs man too, namely, those who should live upon God's provision, yet as sacrilege it is a sin of the first

<sup>10</sup> It is recorded of the greatest of our Prelates, Bishop Andrewes, (in his Funeral Sermon preached by the Bishop of Ely, Nov. 11, 1626,) that "he abhorred Sacrilege as one principal cause among many of the foreign and civil Wars in Christendom, wherein the Reformed, because they took God's portion, and turned it to public uses and private advancements, did suffer just chastisement and correction at God's hand. And he wished that some would take pains to collect how many families that were raised by the spoils of the Church were now vanished, and the place *thereof knows them no more.*"

<sup>1</sup> Lord Bacon, Pacification of the Church. If this was true in Lord Bacon's time, how much more is it now ?

Table, a breach of the loyalty we immediately owe to God; and truly methinks there is too much said in the New Testament against this sin to leave it in the power of any man to imagine that what is said in the Old is abrogated<sup>2</sup>.”

So much for public duties. Let us advert briefly to private ones.

XIII. Lay Impropiators of Tithes hold that property by law. It has come to them by inheritance or purchase. And though the foundations of *Ecclesiastical* Property have been disturbed, it cannot be desirable that any such disturbance should be extended further. For the security of property is the safeguard of Society, and of life itself. Let us, therefore, here speak in the language of one of the wisest and holiest and most charitable of men; “Touching that which hath been taken from the Church in Appropriations (says Richard Hooker) we rest contentedly and quietly without it till it shall please God to touch the hearts of men of their own voluntary accord to restore it to Him again<sup>3</sup>.”

But the Lay Impropiator of Tithes will not resent the assertion, he will rather anticipate it, that he has

<sup>2</sup> Lord Clarendon on Sacrilege. See Note at end. Another eminent layman (ROBERT NELSON, *On the Means of Doing Good, &c.*, p. 147) speaks as follows:—

“Among such means as might make the Church of God shine with the greatest lustre, it is evident that a tax to *purchase the tithes from the Impropiators*, and to restore them to the Church, would be of the greatest consequence. This seems to have been a National Sin, and by this means there may be made a National Restitution. \* \* \* Great would be the advantage of such a purchase to the nation, because it would ease us of that load of sacrilege which has hitherto been our punishment as well as our sin; and it would be a fund for the increase as well as the maintenance of the Parochial Clergy, which is absolutely necessary to supply the wants of the people.”

<sup>3</sup> Hooker, vii. xxiv. 25.

special duties of a sacred kind to the Parish from which those Tithes are derived. He will recollect the retribution that overtook the religious Houses which grasped Tithes to themselves, and forgot the command of God, "Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of *double honour*, especially they *who labour in the word and doctrine.*" He will recollect also that the Improvement in value that may have taken place in his own Impropriation (by enclosures, and by the bringing of land into tillage) has not benefited the Minister of the Parish in the same proportion with himself, and perhaps scarcely at all; but, by the consequent increase of population has increased his labour, and has augmented the demands on his slender means, and so perhaps the Vicarage, with cure of souls, has suffered by the aggrandizement of the Rectory without cure. He will therefore promote every reasonable design for the restitution of those Tithes to their original purposes. Tithes once dedicated to God cannot rightly be in Lay hands, any more than one man created in the image of God can rightly be held as a Slave by another. It does not indeed follow that either Tithes or Slaves should be forcibly wrested from their holders; and violent invectives and intemperate denunciations against Slave-owners and Lay Tithe-holders have only riveted the chains by which Slaves and Tithes are held. But as the holy Apostle St. Paul implored his friend Philemon, by the tender mercies of Christ, to treat his slave Onesimus with brotherly love, as a fellow-member in Christ, so the Christian Minister must conjure the Lay Tithe-owner to remember the sanctity of that property which he holds in his hands, so that men and angels in heaven may have great *joy and consolation in his love because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by him as a brother*<sup>4</sup>. And as the

<sup>4</sup> Philem. 7.

Christian masters of old did often of their own accord bring their slaves to the Church of God, and manumit them in His presence at His Altar, so, heaven be thanked, many noble and pious-hearted Lay Impropriators in England have laid their Impropriations on God's holy Table, and have manumitted their Tithes; and have deemed it their best happiness, and richest wealth, and highest privilege, to restore the property of God to His honour and service<sup>5</sup>.

XIV. Another class of persons may be addressed here. Noble mansions are rising around us, new streets and terraces and squares are extending themselves in the suburbs of our great cities; and when large masses of people have thus been collected together, then at length a subscription is set on foot by some benevolent persons for the building of a new church, and perhaps for the endowment of a minister. And if this design is accomplished,—or if some pious and munificent Founder erects a church there,—the property of those new tenements will be greatly improved thereby. But surely this order of proceeding ought to be reversed. The great Capitalist and Contractor may fitly be required in the first instance to provide for the interests of Religion by charging every house he erects with a ground-rent for religious uses. Then his property would be blessed; then the beauty of holiness would be diffused simultaneously with the splendour of our cities: they would be consecrated to God, and receive a blessing from heaven<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Mal. iii. 10.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Nelson, on the Ways and Methods of Doing Good, Lond. 1715, p. 108, thus speaks. Having described the Acts in the reign of Queen Anne for building fifty new churches, he adds, "How this was brought about even at a time when the nation was involved in a most expensive war, and with what surprising facility it was carried through Parliament, as it doth well indeed deserve to

XV. We have considered certain special cases. But, my brethren, permit me to remind you, *one and all*, that there is a higher Law than the Law of the Land; and that here, as we have seen, the Law of the Land affords no adequate rule of practice; and that by that other higher Law we shall all be judged. Each of you has here a solemn duty to perform,—a duty clearly prescribed by God in the pages of Holy Writ—to set apart a stated portion of your income for the maintenance of the Christian Ministry. Let me exhort you to examine yourselves—How have you performed this sacred duty? how are you now performing it?

XVI. Let us then make the experiment, both as a Nation and as individuals, whether there be not indeed a gracious truth of inestimable value in God's invitation and promise, "*Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house,—meat, spiritual meat, that perisheth not, for the immortal souls of My people—and prove me now herewith, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing*."<sup>7</sup>

What is the use of our silver and gold, our lands and houses, our arts and manufactures, our commerce and merchandise, our furniture, our pictures and equipages, our mansions and our demesnes, unless they are blessed by God? And how can they have His benediction if His command in this sacred matter

be remembered to the honour of the principal managers and movers in it, so it doth also give a comfortable prospect that some succeeding Parliament may be as ready and willing to settle a maintenance upon the Rectors of those new churches. And it is to be wished that the Publick would concern themselves in a matter of such great importance \* \* and especially where buildings increase, they would hereafter *oblige the ground-landlords*, when they build such a number of houses, to *erect a church which might contain the new inhabitants.*"

<sup>7</sup> Mal. iii. 10.

is disobeyed, His service slighted, His worship dishonoured, His ministry impoverished, and thousands and millions of our countrymen left in a state of darkness little better than heathenism? “Verily are *we not guilty concerning our brother*<sup>8</sup>?” Is not his blood upon us? will it not be required of us at the last day? As long as this can be said, then, “*our riches are corrupted, our garments moth-eaten, our gold and silver cankered,*” and we may fear the Apostolic denunciation, “*Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you*<sup>9</sup>.”

But let us give to God, Who gives us all things. Let us lay up treasure in heaven by providing for His worship and service. Let us give to Him in His Ministers, and then, when all other treasure fails, this will remain for ever. We shall bring a blessing on ourselves, our families, our substance, our undertakings. We shall consecrate them to God. We shall entertain Christ in our houses and in our hearts, for he that *receiveth* Christ’s Ministers in *Christ’s name*, and for Christ’s sake, and for Christ’s blessings which they dispense, *receiveth* even *Christ Himself*<sup>1</sup>; he becomes a partner of the reward promised to Christ’s faithful Ministers, for *he that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet’s reward*<sup>2</sup>.

We claim not luxuries for Christ’s Ministers; but for His sake, and for your sake, and especially for the sake of the Poor, we claim that a restoration should be made to them of revenues dedicated to God; and we claim that those revenues should be amplified with

<sup>8</sup> Gen. xlii. 21.

<sup>9</sup> James v. 1, 2.

<sup>1</sup> Luke x. 16. Matt. x. 40. John xiii. 20. Phil. ii. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. x. 41.

the spiritual needs of the people. We claim that, especially in an age of wealth and prodigality like our own, the religion of Christ should not be desecrated by being exposed to the contempt which penury brings. We claim in Christ's name, that the Ministers of the Gospel, who are excluded, and rightly excluded, from those avenues which lead others to worldly wealth, should be furnished, and amply furnished, with the means and appliances, which, now that the days of miracles are passed, are requisite for the efficiency and success of the glorious Gospel which they preach. We claim that they should be able to give alms, and to give them liberally, and so find a readier access to the souls of the Poor by ministering, as Christ ministered, to their bodies. We claim that His Ministers should be able to take a place,—not the last and lowest place—but among the first, in works of piety and charity, and so be ensamples to others; and that it never may be said of the Clergy of England, the wealthiest Nation in the world, that they are ready to preach sermons of Charity to others, but are slow to practise it themselves. We claim these things for Christ's sake, for your sake,—for the sake of the Poor,—for whom Christ died.

Here is a field in which you may sow on earth, that you may reap in heaven. He that soweth plenteously here shall reap plenteously hereafter<sup>5</sup>. And if you sow in this field for Christ's sake, *Who for your sakes became poor* that you might be rich, you will never regret that in this short transitory seed-time of your mortal existence you have made provision for eternity. He Who *ministereth seed to the sower* will multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righte-

<sup>5</sup> 2 Cor. ix. 6.



*ousness* <sup>4</sup>; you will reap a rich harvest hereafter, and at the great Day, the day of harvest, when your mortal bodies, which will soon be sown in weakness, shall be raised, as we trust, in glory, *you will come again with joy, and bring your sheaves* <sup>5</sup> *with you.*

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. ix. 10.

<sup>5</sup> Ps. cxxvi. 7.

## NOTES.

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NOTE to pp. 124 and 140.

*On Ecclesiastical Dignities, &c. and on Additional Sees.*

THE number of the Clergy and of poor Benefices has been greatly increased in late years (see p. 123, *note*), but by the operation of the Acts mentioned in p. 140, the number of Ecclesiastical Dignities has been greatly diminished. Already nearly Sixty Canonries have been suppressed, under those Acts; besides numerous Prebends, as far as their revenues are concerned. This has proved a great discouragement to the Clergy, and they are continually reminded of their loss on every occasion when a Canonry is suppressed. Some remedy might be provided for this great and growing evil by the erection of a considerable number of additional Sees; and it being desirable that in any increase of Bishoprics there should not be any striking disparity between the new and old; but, as in all sound Reforms, the new should be incorporated and imperceptibly blended with the old, it would seem to follow of course that wherever new Bishoprics are founded, new Chapters should be created also. This might be effected by connecting certain Benefices, as endowments of Canonries, with the new Cathedrals; and the Chapter thus formed might be empowered to elect their Bishop as in the old Cathedrals. Such new creations as these would in some degree indemnify the Church and the Clergy for the loss they have sustained in the suppression of so many capitular dignities; and it is not improbable that benevolent individuals might be found to attach endowments to these new Capitular Bodies.

The Author having stated at large in a previous Discourse (No. XXXVI.) some reasons for a considerable increase of the Episcopate at the present time, may be permitted to add here, with regard to the requisite amount of such augmentation, that it will probably be allowed that a quarter of a Million of Souls is a sufficient charge

for a Bishop. According to this estimate, the number of Sees ought now to be increased to about Eighty; a number exceeding only by about Eighteen what was proposed, inclusively of Bishops Suffragan, by Archbishop Cranmer three centuries ago, when the population of England and Wales was only one-fifth of what it is now.

To such a large increase it might be objected by some that it would tend to lower the Episcopal dignity in the public mind; and that, as it is not probable that Revenues could be provided for so large a number so as to secure for them a social position similar in all respects to that enjoyed by the present Episcopate, the Bishops of the New Sees would not exercise that salutary influence, especially on the upper classes, which is now exercised by the Episcopate.

But, perhaps, on the other hand, some danger may be apprehended from the following circumstances.

There is a great and growing demand among various important classes of society for an increase of the Episcopate.

But if this demand is met by a plea that the present *social* position of the Episcopate is a bar to that increase, it is not improbable, especially in the prospective impoverishment of a large number of the Clergy, that an invidious outcry might be raised against the social privileges and property of the Hierarchy; and those privileges and property might be placed in jeopardy as obstructing the desires and claims of those important classes, as well as being obnoxious to many others, and then perhaps some violent measures of a revolutionary character might be apprehended.

The number of Episcopal Seats in the House of Lords not being increased, but the additional Bishops being made capable of succeeding to Seats in Parliament, and being also allowed to *decline* that honour, as many of them for various reasons would probably do, the dignity of the Parliamentary Peerage would be reflected on those who were not in Parliament; and the work of the Church both in Parliament and in the Dioceses would be done more effectually than can now be the case; and the moral influence of the Episcopate, as a learned spiritual body, on the public mind would be increased.

For the purposes above mentioned,—as far as Legislative action is requisite,—one general Act would suffice (similar to 31 Hen. VIII. cap 9. Gibson's Codex, p. 180), empowering the Crown to erect additional Sees, under certain conditions of territory, population, fabric, and consent of parties concerned. The mind of the Church, in the province of Canterbury, has already been expressed on this subject.

Since the publication of the previous Sermon No. XXXVI. "On the Episcopate," the Author has been favoured with various communications on this subject from persons of experience, wisdom, and authority; and the subject is one which seems likely to receive a good deal of public attention; which may serve as an apology for adverting to it again in this place.

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NOTE to p. 146.

Earl of Clarendon on Sacrilege and Lay Impropropriations.—  
Essays, xxii.

*On a Fast Day at Jersey, 1647.*

"WITH what justice can that, which the goodness and bounty of our ancestors have directed to one use, be taken away and applied to another, nay, to such a one as we are morally sure is a use the founders or donors would never have given the same? I doubt not but there may be a supposition of such uses as may not be agreeable to the policy and peace of the state, but *then* the act itself is void, and no such grant can be made; or if the policy of succeeding times find *that* use (being a civil use) inconvenient to the present temper, and so abrogate it, it will be still as if there were no donation, and the thing given must revert to his use, whose it would naturally have been if there had been none such. Neither can law in those cases alter the matter of right and justice; it may render me more potent to do hurt and injury, by making that damage and injury unpenal to me; it cannot make the thing I do just, or lessen my guilt before God. I speak of things evil in themselves, as all things are which God Himself has expressly inhibited to be done; and therefore, if there were an Act of Parliament which authorized the stronger to rob or kill the weaker, I do not think any man will say *that* is less murder or theft before God than if there were no such Act; and, I confess, I cannot apprehend how spoiling or defrauding the Church can be less sacrilege by what authority soever men are qualified to commit it.

"And it is a very weighty observation by the said Mr. Mede (who never received Tithes or offerings, and was too little known in the Church whilst he lived), that they are in a great error who rank sacrilege as a sin against the eighth commandment; for though he

that commits sacrilege indirectly and by consequence robs *men* too, namely, those who should live upon God's provision, yet, as sacrilege, it is a sin of the first table, and not of the second; a breach of the loyalty we immediately owe to God, and not of the duty we owe to our neighbour; and then he cites the text mentioned before in Malachi, 'Will a man rob God,' &c. And truly, methinks, there is too much said in the New Testament against this sin, to leave it in the power of any man to imagine that what is said in the Old is abrogated.

"Many men are involved in sacrilege without their privity or consent, by inheritance and descents; and it may be, have made purchases very innocently of lands which they never knew had been dedicated to the Church: and it cannot reasonably be imagined that either of these, especially if they have no other estates, or very little, but what are marked with the same brand, will, out of the conscience of the great-grandfather's impiety, ransom themselves from a leprosy which is not discernible, by giving away all they have; and which, by established laws, are as unquestionably their own as any thing can be made to belong to any man. But they will rather leave their ancestors to pay their own forfeiture, and be very indulgent to those arguments which would persuade them that what was sacrilege a hundred years since is so purged away in so many descents that it ceases to be so in the present possessor: however he will never file away the stain that may yet remain in his skin with an instrument that will open all his veins till his very heart's blood issue and be drawn out. Nor can it be expected that he who has innocently and lawfully purchased what was innocently and lawfully to be sold, because he finds afterwards that those lands had so many years since belonged to some religious house, which, if he had known, he would not have bought,—will therefore lose his money and leave the land to him whose conscience will give him leave to take it; for though he might innocently, though ignorantly, buy it, he cannot after his discovery sell it with the same ignorance;—but he will choose a lawyer rather than a Bishop for his Confessor, and satisfy himself with that title which he is sure can be defended. In a word, *he* must depart too much from his natural understanding who believes it probable that all that has been taken from the Church in former ages will be restored to it in this or those which shall succeed, to the ruin of those many thousand families which enjoy the alienations, though they do not think that it was at first with justice and piety aliened: but will satisfy themselves with the possession, and by degrees believe, that since it must not be restored to those uses and ends to which it was at first dedicated and devoted, it may

be as justly enjoyed by them with their other title as by any other persons to whom it may be assigned. Whereas, if learned, prudent, and conscientious men, upon a serious deliberation and reflection of the great mercy of God, and that under the law He both permitted and prescribed expedients, to expiate for trespasses and offences, which, by inadvertency and without malice, men frequently run into, and therefore that it may be piously hoped that in a transgression of this nature He will not be rigorously disposed to exact the utmost farthing from the heirs of the transgressors, who, with the authority of the government under which they lived, and, in many cases, with the consent and resignation of those in whom the interest was fully invested, became unwarily owners of what in truth, in a manner, was taken from God Himself: I say, if such men, upon such and other reflections which might occur to them, would advise a reasonable method in which they who are possessed of estates and fortunes of that kind, may well assign a proportion of what they enjoy, to such pious and charitable uses, as may probably do as much good as those estates did when they were in their possession from whom they were taken, and yet not deprive the owners of more than they may without great damage part with;—it is very possible that very many persons, out of the observation of the misfortunes which have often befallen the posterity of those who have been eminently enriched by those sacred spoils, and it may be, out of some casual reflections and reluctancy which now and then may interrupt the most cheerful divertisements, would dedicate somewhat of what they enjoy towards the reparation of what charity has for a long time suffered; and by this means the poor bishoprics, which cannot support the dignity of the function, may be better endowed, poor Vicarages comfortably supplied, and other charitable works performed in the education of poor children and the like. And they who thus contribute out of the freedom and bounty of their natures, will find a serenity of mind that will please them, and make them believe that the rest will prosper the better, and that they have more left than they enjoyed before; and when the matter has been well and discreetly weighed, and good mediums instilled into the minds of men, by conference and conversation, the method and prescription will be most powerfully given by the liberality and example of those who are wrought upon by others, or by their own contemplation.”

## SERMON XXXIX.

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### CHURCH RATES.

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MATT. xvii. 24.

“*Doth not your Master pay tribute? He saith, Yes*<sup>1</sup>.”

OUR Blessed Lord had now returned to Capernaum, after one of His usual circuits in the neighbourhood, and had entered the house,—perhaps that of Andrew and Peter,—which was His ordinary place of residence in that city. In the mean time His Disciple St. Peter was accosted by certain persons asking him, *Doth not your Master pay tribute?* or, rather, Does He not pay *the tribute*<sup>2</sup>,—a special sum for a known purpose? The reply was, *Yes*. And St. Peter came to the house where Jesus was, and before he had announced the purport of his errand, Jesus anticipated him, saying, “*What thinkest thou, Simon? Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children or of strangers?*” Peter saith unto Him, *Of strangers*. Jesus saith unto him, *Then are the children free*. Notwithstanding, lest we *should offend them*, go thou to the sea, and cast a hook, and take up the

<sup>1</sup> Preached at Westminster Abbey, Sunday afternoon, July 30.

<sup>2</sup> τὰ δίδραχμα.

fish that first cometh up ; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money<sup>3</sup>: that take, and *give unto them for me and thee.*"

On this narrative we may observe,—

I. 1. That the tribute here mentioned was *not a civil*, but *ecclesiastical* one. It was levied for the maintenance of the fabric and for the service of the Temple at Jerusalem. It had been instituted originally in the wilderness for the uses of the Tabernacle<sup>4</sup>, and was imposed upon every Israelite above twenty years of age, and was thus a personal tax. At *that* earlier period, it was paid once for all. But in process of time it was made an *annual* impost by human authority. Such it was in our Lord's ministry; and such it continued to be till the taking of Jerusalem by the Romans, when it was sequestered from its sacred uses by the Roman Conqueror, and transferred to the Imperial Treasury<sup>5</sup>.

So much for the tribute itself.

2. Let us now consider the circumstances under which, and the Person from whom, it was demanded on the present occasion.

You need not be reminded that the service of the

<sup>3</sup> *στατηρα*, i. e. twice the *διδραχμα*.

<sup>4</sup> Exod. xxx. 11—16. S. Hilary (ad loc.) says, "Dominus didrachma solvere postulatur, hoc enim omni Israel lex pro redemptione animæ et corporis constituerat, in ministerio *Templi* servientium;" and S. Ambrose ad Justum, Ep. vii., says, "Hoc est didrachma quod exigebatur secundum legem;" and Theophylact ad loc., *ἠρπυσεν ὁ Θεὸς ἑθθῆναι τὸ δίδραχμον τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν . . . τοῦτο τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν καὶ τῷ ναῷ προσήγετο.* "Hunc nummum quilibet Israelita qui viginti annos natus erat usque ad 50 *in usum sanctuarii* annuatim solvere debebat." Mintert. Lex. v. *δίδραχμα*. Some valuable information on the subject may be seen in Mr. Trench's Notes on the Miracles, pp. 371—388. 3rd edit. See also Matthew Henry's comment on the passage.

<sup>5</sup> See the particulars in Josephus Antiq. xviii. 9; and De Bell. Jud. vii. 6.



Temple at Jerusalem had then degenerated from its original purity, and that they who officiated in it were unworthy of their holy calling. "Make not My Father's House a *house of merchandise*<sup>6</sup>." "*My House shall be called the House of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves*<sup>7</sup>," was the sentence of Christ Himself. At that time the Priesthood was often put up for sale, and was bartered to the highest bidder, by the Roman power<sup>8</sup>. Annas and Caiaphas were High Priests. Our Lord foreknew that they would instigate the people to say, *Crucify Him, Crucify Him*; He foretold that the Temple in which they ministered, and for which the tribute was now demanded, would soon be destroyed for the sins of the Priests and People, and that *not one stone would be left upon another, because they knew not the day of their visitation*<sup>9</sup>.

3. Besides, it appears that at this particular period the payment of the tribute to the Temple would *not* be enforced in any of the *civil* courts of the country<sup>1</sup>. The civil sword was now in the hand of Rome, a Heathen Power; and she was not disposed to wield it in behalf of Ecclesiastical edicts issued by the Jewish Sanhedrim. Hence it seems the question addressed to St. Peter was not uttered in the imperious tone of a command, but in the milder accents of an enquiry,—*Doth not your Master pay tribute?*

4. Next, let us observe that the Person concerning whom the question is asked, was Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Lord of the Temple; He, of whom it was written, *The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly*

<sup>6</sup> John ii. 16.

<sup>7</sup> Matt. xxi. 13.

<sup>8</sup> See Jos. Antiq. XV. ii. § 4; XV. iii. § 1; XX. viii. § 5.

<sup>9</sup> Luke xix. 44.

<sup>1</sup> See the note of Grotius on the passage, who says, "*Credibile est multos tributum detrectâsse,*" and the remarks of Camero and Lightfoot here.

come to His Temple: and who may abide the day of His coming? If He paid tribute to the Temple, could He be the Lord of the Temple? might He not thus cast a stumbling-block in the way of the people, and hinder them from acknowledging Him as God? Ought He not, therefore, for their sakes as well as His own, to decline the payment?

5. Consider now our Lord's conduct here. He first proved His Deity to St. Peter by reading his thoughts, and by telling him the purport of the message which the Apostle came to deliver. When Peter was come into the house, Jesus prevented him—He forestalled his announcement—by a question, "*What thinkest thou, Simon? Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children or of strangers?*" Peter saith unto Him, *Of strangers.* Jesus saith unto him, *Then are the children free.*" The children of *earthly* kings enjoy immunity from tribute to their earthly parents; so I, the Son of God, am exempt from tribute to My *heavenly* Father for the maintenance and service of His House<sup>2</sup>. If, therefore, I pay this tribute—do not imagine that I pay it as a due from One Who is God. But in order that I may not offend others by declining to pay the tribute, and so tempt them to withhold it, and lead them to imagine that I despise the public worship of God, and the laws and usages of My country, I will pay the tribute. Not because I owe the tribute to the Temple, but because I owe them an example of obedience to

<sup>2</sup> Mal. iii. 1, 2.

<sup>3</sup> Theophylact well explains our Lord's question to Peter thus, εἰ οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς οὐ λαμβάνουσι φόρον ἀπὸ τῶν υἱῶν αὐτῶν, πῶς ὁ ἐπουράνιος βασιλεὺς ἀπ' ἐμοῦ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ λήψεται τὸ εἰδραχμον; τοῦτο γὰρ τοῖς ἱερεῦσι καὶ τῷ ναῷ προσήγγοτο· εἰ οὖν ἐλεύθεροὶ εἰσιν οἱ υἱοὶ τῶν κάτω βασιλέων, τοῦτ' ἐστὶ μηδὲν τελοῦντες, πόσῳ μᾶλλον Ἐγώ;

the Law<sup>4</sup>. But lest, on the other hand, I offend them by seeming to be tributary to the Temple, and so to be less than God, I will not make the payment from the money in this thy house, nor from any common fund in the purse of Judas, but I will work a miracle for the purpose. I will command the elements as God while I pay tribute as man. Go, therefore, to the sea. I, Who have proved My Divinity by reading the secrets of thy heart, will now shew it by fathoming the abysses of the deep, and by manifesting My knowledge and exerting My power there. Go thou to the sea—the neighbouring sea of Galilee—and cast a hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money there—a Stater—that is, exactly the sum requisite for both of us—that take, and give unto them—half for Me and half for thee. Thus shall I be an example of obedience to men as man, by paying tribute to the Temple for myself and thee; and thus I will give greater force to this example, by making the Sea itself to pay tribute to Me as God.

## II. Let us now apply this Scripture to ourselves.

### 1. For more than five hundred years<sup>5</sup> the Houses of

<sup>4</sup> Theophyl. ad loc. well expounds this also, *ἵνα μὴ λογισθῶμεν ὑπερόπται καὶ καταφορηταὶ τοῦ νόμου, ἕως τὸ τέλος· οὐ γὰρ ὡς ὀφείλων εἰῶμι, ἀλλ' ὡς τὴν ἐκείνων ἀσθένειαν εἰορθούμενος.*

<sup>5</sup> There is evidence of a payment for Church uses in the laws of Ina, King of the West Saxons, A. D. 693 (Wilkins' Concil. i. 59), which enact that the payment shall be made annually at Martinmas, and specify certain fines for non-payment. It is called "*census Ecclesiæ*;" as the Temple rate is called *κῆνσος* by St. Matthew. This law is reiterated A. D. 969 (Wilkins, i. 245).

Whatever the nature of this "Census" may have been, certain it is that Church Rates have been paid in England for Six hundred years. See the Constitution of Othobon, A. D. 1268, as quoted by Chief Justice Tindal, "By the common custom of England, the repair of the Nave, in which the lay Parishioners sit, falls on the

God in our Land have been sustained, and the requisites for divine worship in them have been supplied, by means of a tribute, levied on the inhabitants in respect of the lands or houses occupied by them in their respective Parishes.

Thus provision has been made for the Public Worship of Almighty God, according to the ritual of the Church which is in possession of those fabrics, and which traces its ministerial succession from the Apostles, and which, though it may have been more or less pure at different periods, has never lost its identity, any more than an individual ceases to be himself, in consequence of variations in his health; and which is the only religious body in the country that possesses, or can lay any claim to, the name of the "Church of England."

This provision has been settled by common usage anterior to all our written law. A National Covenant has been made with the most High God for the maintenance of His House, and of Public Worship therein.

Nor is this all; A Provision was thus made for the

Parishioners;" and Wilkins, *ibid.* i. 714, A.D. 1256, "Parochiani debent providere quod Ecclesia sit honesta, cooperta bene, et quod campanile sit bene coopertum et securum contra omne periculum, et debent invenire campanas et chordas campanarum et calicem argenteum, libros sufficientes.

"Provideant etiam Parochiani quod cœmeterium eorum sit bene clausum, &c."

This last is a Constitution of Sarum, and agrees with that of Exeter, A.D. 1287; and with the Provincial Constitutions of Archbishop Winchelsea, A.D. 1305; and Stratford, A.D. 1343, which may be seen in Mr. Swan's collections, "On the Principle of Church Rates," Lond. 1837. See also Archdeacon Hale's learned Essay "On the Antiquity of the Church Rate System," Lond. 1837, pp. 31. 44, quoting the opinion of the Attorney-General, "By an act of the whole Legislature from the year 1285, the Bishops were authorized by ecclesiastical censures to compel the Parishioners to repair, and to provide ornaments for, the Church."

Poor. They were acknowledged to have a legal claim to a place where they may hear the word of God, and receive the Sacraments: and to enjoy this privilege *without money and without price*<sup>6</sup>. The Poor have been recognized by our Laws as having as much right to have Churches maintained for them wherein to worship God, and Church-yards or Cemeteries wherein to be buried<sup>7</sup>, as they have to have public Bridges kept up for them to pass over, and public Roads whereon to travel<sup>8</sup>.

Thus a solemn compact has been ratified, by which a portion of all property, according to the exigencies of the case, has been dedicated to Almighty God. And every one who is born on English soil finds himself, by the fact of his birth, concluded by the terms of this covenant made from time immemorial. He finds himself obliged to pay what are called "Church Rates," just as every Israelite found himself obliged, by a law passed many centuries before his birth, to pay a certain annual Temple Rate for the maintenance of God's House, and of its sacred services at Jerusalem.

<sup>6</sup> Isa. lv. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Have not the Poor been deprived of a common law right—viz. to Christian burial of their Dead—by the closing of Church-yards, without any provision for interment, except at a heavy expense? In some modern Cemeteries, a poor man's corpse is not received into the Church without a high fee—to say nothing of other charges incurred for conveyance of the corpse to a distance from the Parish.

<sup>8</sup> On the subject generally, see "The Church Rate Question and the Principles involved in it," A Charge to the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Maidstone, by the Ven. Archdeacon Harrison, 1854; and "The Church Warden's Guide," by C. G. Prideaux, Lond. 1853, 6th edit., and a Letter by the Rev. F. Merewether, M.A., Vicar of Whitwick, Lond. 1853.

And see Note A, at end of this Discourse.

2. But now, some among us are weary of this usage ; they remonstrate against it as an abuse, they resent it as a wrong, and desire to abrogate it.

And on what grounds ?

It is alleged by some of them that they do not hold the doctrines of the Church of England, or at least do not hold them all, and that they find many things amiss in her ritual ; that they therefore have separated themselves from her public congregations, and that they cannot in conscience contribute to the fabric and worship of a Church whose teaching and services they do not approve, and from which they derive no benefit <sup>9</sup>.

They appeal also to their numbers : They say that though “ this tribute might originally have been just, when all in England were of one faith, it is now become unjust by the prevalence of dissent.” They affirm that in some places they themselves are a majority ; and that inasmuch as there is no civil penalty by which a majority can be visited for refusing this payment, therefore it may be refused with a safe conscience <sup>1</sup>.

3. What then is to be said here ?

4. First, be it observed, the question before us is not one of doctrine or of worship, or of numbers—but of morals. It is concerning the justice and honesty of withholding a due, authorized by the prescriptive right of many centuries. Let us not call on any one to violate

<sup>9</sup> See Note B, at end of this Discourse.

<sup>1</sup> It has been recently determined by high judicial authority (Lord Truro, Aug. 12, 1853), that although “ the Parishioners of every Parish are under an imperative legal obligation to provide for the necessary repair of the Church, and for the expenses incidental to public worship,” yet, “ if a majority of them are so misled as to avow their determination to disobey the law and to refuse to perform an obligation unquestionably resting upon them,” then, in that case, there is no legal power of a civil kind by which they can be constrained to perform the duty which the law enjoins.

his conscience, but we would earnestly and affectionately conjure every one whom it may concern, to remember that there is such a thing as an *erring* conscience, and to take good heed that his conscience is well *informed*. Let him take care that he does not wound his own conscience and the consciences of others by pleading a scruple of conscience as a reason for violating a law by which his conscience ought to be regulated. Let him take heed that he does not offend the Divine Author of his conscience, the Divine Lawgiver, Who *alone is able to save and to destroy*<sup>2</sup>, the all-seeing Judge of the quick and dead. Let us not ask any one to offend his conscience, but let us implore such persons not to offend God; and to consider whether they can in conscience defraud Him of His due, and appropriate it to themselves<sup>3</sup>.

We are all bound by natural allegiance to obey the

<sup>2</sup> James iv. 12.

<sup>3</sup> The following considerations, not introduced into this Discourse, may perhaps be admissible in a Note:—

Suppose the Dissenter to be relieved—as a Dissenter,—from paying Church Rates. Then,

1. The value of the Church Rates would be added to that of property occupied by him.

2. If this property were his own, then he would have an addition made *pro tanto* to the value of his own estate.

3. A premium would thus be given to Dissent, and a penalty be imposed on Churchmanship; which would be burdened so much the more in proportion as Dissent was relieved and benefited.

4. Suppose, however, the property was only *occupied* by him, and not his freehold, then would not his Landlord add the value of the Church Rates to his rent? Would then, in fact, the Dissenting *Tenant* be benefited by the abolition of Church Rates?

5. Suppose the case of a Dissenting Lay Impropriator of Tithe. If a Dissenter is to be relieved from a legal liability to aid in repairing the *body* of the Church, the Dissenting Lay Impropriator ought also by parity of reason to be relieved from repairing the *Chancel*. And thus Tithes would be more valuable in the hands of Dissenting Laymen than of Conforming Laymen, and than even of

authority under which we find ourselves placed by the Providence of God. We hold all our property subject to the tributes imposed upon it by the laws of our country. *Render unto all their dues*, says the Holy Spirit of God, *Tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour*<sup>4</sup>. And if any man is to be allowed to make his own opinions the measure of his obedience to the laws of his country, and the controllers of his payments to her needs, then we do not hesitate to say that all civil society among us will soon be at an end, and we shall be reduced to a state of anarchy.

5. Consider, for instance, the bearings of such a principle as this on our present condition.

We are engaged in War: we are called upon to contribute largely to its expenditure<sup>5</sup>. All among us regard war as an evil; some among us condemn it as sinful; and denounce all hostile measures as irreconcilable with, and contradictory to, the spirit and precepts of the Gospel of Peace.

If now our private sentiments are to be made the rule of our submission to authority, these persons who hold such opinions concerning War, and hold them very strongly as vital truths of Christianity, ought not to be required to pay tribute for the prosecution of

the Clergy of the Church. And no provision would exist in such cases for the repair of chancels.

6. And Vicars, who are now exempt from Church Rate, and whose means are often very slender, would, if Church Rates were abolished, be subject in many cases to the anxiety and burden of providing for the maintenance of churches.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. xiii. 7.

<sup>5</sup> *e. g.* By the doubling of the income tax, to be levied as long as the war last: so that this addition may be called a War-tax. And it is a tax which, if the conscience is ill-informed,—and if an ill-informed conscience is to be recognized as having a right to overrule Law,—can and will be easily evaded.



war, they ought not in conscience to do so, they ought to submit to any penalty rather than obey the law<sup>6</sup>. And this precedent being once established, other persons may plead other scruples of conscience against the payment of other tributes, and against obedience to other laws, till at length every tribute may be evaded and every law be infringed, and the Realm of England may find herself without tributes and without laws; she may be bereft of Fleets and Armies as well

<sup>6</sup> The following questions and replies are found in p. 375 of Evidence taken before the Committee on Church Rates, 1851. The witness examined is opposed to Church Rates:—

“2850. Many taxes were imposed in the course of the last War, commencing in 1793, which were called war taxes: in the event of an individual having a conscientious objection, as one large body of Dissenters are supposed to feel to war in general, would you or would you not consider the conscience of any one of those parties would justify him in refusing to pay a tax, expressly and distinctly raised for the prosecution of a war?—*Witness. Certainly I do.*

“2851. And if such tax were imposed upon a part of his property which he might buy the year after the imposition of such tax, do you or do you not consider that he would be more or less justified in refusing payment of a tax upon a house which he had bought subject to such war tax?—Perhaps it would be difficult to give an opinion in every case; there might be circumstances which might be known to the individual himself, which would lead him to form a correct judgment on the subject. What I mean to say is, that in all cases where conscience is directly opposed to any human law, a man is bound to follow the dictates of his conscience, whatever the consequences may be; I lay that down as a general principle.

“2852. Do you wish this to be understood in cases where he has actually received a consideration, or enjoys a property for so much less annual rent than he would have paid if no such liability had been imposed upon such property?—*He can always satisfy his conscience, by appropriating that money in some other way, which he might believe would be more beneficial.*”

On such principles as these resistance to Church Rates is grounded. Would not they equally satisfy a person's conscience in withholding the addition made to the Income Tax for War, and in appropriating that money in some other way?

as of Churches and Chapels. And then what will her condition be at home and abroad?

We do not therefore scruple to say that if men may violate the law, and decline to pay a tribute, such as Church Rates, ratified and consecrated by the usage of six hundred years, there is not, and will not, be a single law or tribute in England, which may not be shaken to its foundations.

6. And here we may revert to the example of Christ. When He was on earth His country was subject to a heathen rule, and His countrymen resented that rule not only as tyrannical but impious. It enslaved the Holy City, and outraged the dignity of Jehovah. Shall we, they said, the favoured people of God, give tribute to Cæsar, a foreigner, an idolater, a Tiberius? Shall we pay taxes that may be expended in maintaining falsehood and oppressing truth? Thus they pleaded scruples of conscience against payment of tribute and obedience to law. But what was the reply of Him Who was born King of the Jews? What was the sentence of our Everlasting Judge? *Render unto Cæsar the things that be Cæsar's*<sup>7</sup>. If by God's will you have been brought into slavery for your sins, if you are under Cæsar's laws, if his coin is in your hands and passes current in your markets, you must pay tribute to Cæsar, even to Tiberius Cæsar: you must *render* it as a *due*. So spake the Son of God, the King of Kings. And thus He has taught us that resistance to the laws of our country, in things not unlawful, is rebellion against God.

7. Such was our Lord's practice in regard to *civil* tribute. And now what was His conduct as to *ecclesiastical*?

The gatherers of the tribute for the Temple came to Capernaum. They applied to St. Peter for a Temple

<sup>7</sup> Matt. xxii. 21.

Rate, as the Churchwardens of your Parish may apply to you for a Church Rate. “*Doth not your Master pay tribute?* He saith, *Yes.*” It was an annual payment, and probably, therefore, our Lord had made it in former years. Now, as we have already seen, our Saviour, as Lord of the Temple, might have declined to pay tribute to the Temple. And if the spirit of those who decline the payment of a Church Rate for necessary repairs of God’s house had been the spirit of Christ, He would have pleaded that the tax in question was a personal tax, that He had come into the world for the purpose of preaching a new Religion, which would supersede the Levitical Law—that He had made His Apostles to be Ministers of that Religion—that He could not by Himself or by them contribute to the maintenance of two Religions—and particularly that He could not in conscience contribute to the maintenance of a Temple and a Ritual profaned by hypocrisy, tyrannized over by a heathen power, and desecrated by Priests who were conspiring against the Lord of the Temple, and who would soon bring destruction on it and on their country by their sins.

All this, we say, He might have pleaded, if the spirit we have described had been the spirit of Christ. But, no! He, the Lord of the Temple, paid tribute to the Temple, to the Temple which was made a *house of merchandise*,—*a den of thieves*, by the Priests; to the Temple in which Annas and Caiaphas ministered; to the Temple which would soon be levelled with the dust for their rebellion against God, and for their crucifixion of Himself. He works a miracle expressly for the purpose. He sends His disciple to the sea, He brings the Tribute-money from the deep by His divine power, He pays it over as His own and His Apostle’s tribute to the treasury, the treasury of

Annas and Caiaphas, who gave their thirty pieces of silver to Judas Iscariot, that he might betray Christ.

8. Let us, therefore, now turn to those who may feel disposed to decline the payment of Church Rates.

Brethren, you who are Christians, behold the conduct of Christ. Copy that Divine pattern. He hath left you *an example that you should follow His steps ; Let the same mind be in you, that was also in Christ Jesus*<sup>8</sup>. Let us walk as He walked. For, unless we are conformed to His likeness here, we shall not partake of His glory hereafter.

Let us grant, for argument's sake, that all you may urge against the doctrine and ritual of the Church of England, is true. Yet it cannot exceed what Christ might have said, and did say, against the Church of Judæa. If your allegations be true, then it is your duty, it is the duty of us all, to endeavour to *reform the Church*, to cleanse her and restore her, as Christ endeavoured to reform, to cleanse, and to restore the Church of Judæa ; and (let me add) as our own English Reformers purified and restored the Church of England when she lay in darkness and error. But it is *not* your duty, it is not the duty of any man, to withhold a tribute due to God by the laws of the land. Christ paid such a tribute as that in the worst of times. His Apostles paid it. Our Reformers paid Church Rates in similar times ; and, if Religious Reformation is now necessary in England, so much the more requisite is it that all who would reform the Church should pay them ; for the cause of Reformation cannot prosper if it be marred by acts of fraud upon the poor, and of sacrilege against God.

9. But you aver that it is unjust that you should

<sup>8</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 21. Phil. ii. 5.

pay to the maintenance of a Church from which you derive no benefit.

Permit me to say in reply, with all Christian affection, that this is not the point at issue. The question is not, whether you are benefited by the Church, but whether you can be benefited by depriving her of her due. And now—as to your not being benefited by the Church, let me ask you one question. What do you reckon as the greatest spiritual benefit you enjoy? You will answer, without hesitation, the Bible—the English Scriptures. Whence then did you receive that benefit? From the Church. Not a single line of the Bible in your hands is due to a single Dissenter from the Church. The whole of it was translated by members of the Church; and as long as you have the English Bible, you derive benefit from the Church—and the greatest benefit you enjoy is derived from the Church.

Time does not allow us to dilate on other benefits you receive from the Church. You owe the best English comments on Scripture to the Church. You owe the English Reformation to the Church. And if you are not to fall again under the tyranny of Rome, it will be due, under God, to the Church. You owe the blessings of peace and quietness to the Church. You owe to it that a sense of true religion is maintained among us. It is certain that many Dissenters dissent from other Dissenters more than they dissent from the Church; and if the various sects are now to be preserved from tearing one another in pieces—as they did in the Great Rebellion, when the Church was overthrown as far as man could overthrow it—they will owe it mainly to the Church. And if they should again succeed in effecting what was then done, they will

then find, too late, how much they owed to the Church.

10. Again : you may say that you are *not members* of the Church, and that you ought not, therefore, to contribute to its fabrics and services. Suppose this to be a fair mode of putting the argument—what then ? Is there an impassable gulf between you and us ? Have we no fellow membership with you, nor you with us ? Are you not Christians ? And if you are Christians, then we hesitate not to say, you *are* members of the Church<sup>9</sup>. No one ever became a Christian by schism. As far as you are Christians—as far as you hold any Christian truth, or enjoy any Christian grace—we do not scruple to say you *are* members of the Church, which is the divinely constituted depository of Christian truth and grace. As far as you are Christians, you are members of the Church—though as far as you are in schism you are unsound members of the Church—the same Church with ourselves. And though you may sometimes deny this in words, yet you confess it daily in acts. You have your Bible from us. You use our Bible in your houses, and schools, and religious assemblies. How often do you resort to the Church for the baptism of your children ; many of you come to the Church to hear the Word of God, and even to partake in the Lord's Supper at our altars. Many of you come to our Churches in the most solemn hours of your lives. You come there for Holy Matrimony ; and you come there for the burial of your dead<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> See above, No. XXXV., p. 39, on this topic.

<sup>10</sup> The following statement was made in evidence before the Committee on Church Rates, by a gentleman—a Dissenter—who had been the leader of the opposition to Church Rates at Braintree

You bury your parents and your brethren in our Churches and Church-yards, where your forefathers lie; and perhaps you expect to be buried there yourselves. And we should be denounced as guilty of intolerance if we were to refuse those rights of Christian fellowship to you. Can it then be said, that you are in no sense members of the Church? and that, when you are called on to pay a due for the maintenance of its fabric and services, you are required to give to that with which you have no connexion, and from which you derive no benefit?

11. And now, let us be permitted to ask you, Have you duly considered the blessings of religious unity, and the evils of religious division? Can you lay your hand on your heart and say, as in the presence of the all-seeing God, that you have carefully *examined* the doctrines and ritual of the Church of England? that you have compared them with Holy Scripture, as understood by the primitive Church? and that you are fully satisfied, that the Church of England *imposes as terms of communion tenets and practices* unscriptural and anti-scriptural? and that you are therefore *compelled*, for the salvation of your soul, to separate yourself from her—that there is no alter-

and other places, and has probably been oftener so engaged than any one in England:—

“In the parish of Gosfield I have been permitted to construct a family vault and erect a family mausoleum; I am consequently in the *habit of resorting to the parish church* of Gosfield on the death of any member of our family, and am thereby a *partaker of the advantages resulting from the church* of Gosfield; under those circumstances, I thought that the argument of social justice which led me to deny payment of a rate to the church of Braintree, of Bocking, and of Halstead, the services and ministrations of which I did not avail myself of, did not apply to the parish of Gosfield, in which I was thus a *partaker of the benefits of the church*; under these circumstances I felt it to be perfectly consistent to pay without scruple the church rate of Gosfield.”

native, but Church-unity must be broken, and schisms must be multiplied, and the mystical Body of Christ must be rent by innumerable divisions? Have you calmly and carefully gone through the successive stages of this argument? *If* you have *not*—then we must be permitted to warn you that you are in great danger; and that this peril will be increased, if, on the ground of a conclusion which may be erroneous (and, from the bottom of our heart, we are persuaded that it *is* erroneous), you proceed to rob the Church of Christ of her dues, to defraud Christ of His rights, to refuse the payment of a Church Rate, and so do what you can to disfranchise the Temples of our land, and to force them to be let out for hire like seats in a theatre, and thus to banish from them the Poor, the widow, and the fatherless<sup>1</sup>? Can you expect a blessing

<sup>1</sup> The following is from p. 481 of the Evidence on Church Rates, —witness examined, R. Barnes, Esq.:—

“Do you not consider that a Church Rate is the only security which the poor man has for possessing a place in which to worship God?—I think it is the only security, and I cannot imagine to myself any so effectual and so permanent as the security upon which he has now to rely.

“It is in point of fact a claim of poverty on property in your views?—My view decidedly is that, that it is the poor man’s right to have the church maintained, and an obligation on the property so to do.

“I need not ask you whether it would be an injustice done to the poor man if that right were taken away from him?—I think decidedly so, and that constitutes the root almost of all the opinions I have ventured to express.”

The following is from the evidence of Dr. Lushington, p. 331:—

“Have you formed any opinion as to whether payment for the repair of churches out of *Pew-rents* would be either desirable or possible?—I have thought of that question very much indeed, and I will not hesitate to answer it to the best of my belief; I have not the slightest objection to tax the occupants of pews who are capable of paying, but *I never would assent to any system that should leave the poor of England without a place to go to church.* [“And



from God upon yourselves, your substance, and your families, if you are guilty of this sin? May it not rather be feared that your estate will be blighted, your riches cankered, your household chastised with sickness, your last hour saddened with sorrowful remembrances and dark forebodings, and you yourselves condemned hereafter, like the rich man, who had no pity on the poor outcast lying at his gate.

12. But, it has been said, there is *no civil* penalty<sup>2</sup>

“And there would be great difficulties in any such tax as should not make it a beneficiary interest to the managers of churches to create as many pews and as few free seats as they could?—I am afraid it must be so; that is quite manifest.”

Instead of efforts to extend and perpetuate Pew-rents (as the abolition of Church Rates would do) the most zealous endeavours ought rather to be made in the opposite direction, viz. to restrict and abolish Pew-rents as much as may be.

<sup>2</sup> There is a *spiritual* power. ‘No doubts have ever been raised’ (said Chief Justice Tindal, in his judgment, Feb. 8, 1841) ‘but that the Spiritual Court has power, by ecclesiastical censures, to compel the Churchwardens to perform their duty in relation to the repairs of the Church; to compel the parishioners to perform their duty in providing the means to make such repairs.’ Cp. Lyndwoode, Provin. p. 53, ed. Oxon. 1679, on the ‘*pœna excommunicationis*’ for default. “*M. Sub pœna . . . Hæc autem pœna excommunicationis non poterit esse in quantum concernit Parochianos ut universos, qui tenentur ad fabricam navis Ecclesiæ, . . . licet posset infligi in singulares personas singulariter, quæ in eâ parte essent culpabiles. Et idem puto in hoc casu quoad suspensionis pœnam.*’ The remedy in ancient times for a *general* default in this respect was ‘per suspensionem vel interdictum loci, usque ad congruam reparationem factam.’” It was agreed by the Court of Common Pleas, in *Rogers v. Davenant*, 2 Mod. Rep. 8, “That those Parishioners who are willing to contribute to charge of repairing the Church may be spared, but as for those who are obstinate and refuse to do it, the Spiritual Court may proceed to excommunication against him.” Spiritual penalties were resorted to in the Ecclesiastical Court, May 8, 1841. See Phillimore’s *Burns’ Eccl. Law*, vol. i. p. 388, and *Prideaux’s Churchwarden’s Guide*, p. 244. And in regard to this point it may deserve consideration whether the consultations held in Convocation, at the beginning of last century,

which constrains you, if you are a majority, to make the payment in question. It may be so<sup>3</sup>. Perhaps our ancestors did not imagine such a case to be possible, and did not provide a civil penalty for it, as the Legislator of old omitted to set down in his code any punishment for parricide. But, be assured, the voice of majorities is no safe rule for a Christian. Otherwise, what mean the words of the Spirit, *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil*<sup>4</sup>; *Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished*<sup>5</sup>; *Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that find it*<sup>6</sup>? Besides, in the age of Christ, as far as appears, there was no legal process, save only a spiritual one, such as excommunication, which could compel any one to pay a rate to the Temple. But what then? The rate was due, and Christ paid it. And He is our great Exemplar, our future Judge. Will you not imitate Him? Are Christians to do no duties but what are forced upon them by fear of human punishment? Are they to be like *horse and mule which have no understanding, whose mouths must be held with bit and bridle lest they fall upon thee*<sup>7</sup>?

with the design of "appropriating the censure of excommunication to matters merely spiritual" might not be available. See Bp. Gibson on Parochial Visitations, p. 31. Perhaps with this view the civil penalties (53 Geo. III. c. 127) annexed to spiritual censures should be repealed. See further, Note C, at end of this Discourse.

<sup>3</sup> This must be understood with reservations.

1. There is the writ *de contumace capiendo*, with the penalty of imprisonment, which would attend the sentence of the Ecclesiastical Courts for a refusal to concur in repairing the Parish Church.

2. Several Acts have been passed by the Legislature, authorizing money to be borrowed on Church Rates, for rebuilding Churches; and these Acts would compel Church Rates to be made, after the money is once borrowed.

<sup>4</sup> Exod. xxiii. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Prov. xi. 21.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. vii. 13.

<sup>7</sup> Ps. xxxii. 10.

Even the heathen could condemn such a principle as that ; even he could say,—

“Oderunt peccare *boni virtutis amore :*  
*Tu nihil admittes in te formidine pœnæ ;*”

Even the heathen felt and said that human tribunals are not alone to be feared, but that there is a judgment to come,—

“Si genus humanum et mortalia temnitis arma ;  
At sperate Deos memores fandi atque nefandi ;”

And even the heathen could admire those who are virtuous without constraint, and holy without coercion,—

“Saturni gentem, haud vinclo nec legibus æquam,  
Sponte suâ, veterisque Dei se more tenentem.”

And you are Christians ; and the very absence of a human penalty constraining you to keep the law, ought rather to deter you from breaking it, and make you more eager to fulfil it. For thus you will shew that the principle of your life is not servile fear, but filial love ; you will be subject not *for wrath, but for conscience sake*<sup>8</sup> ; you will do your duty not as in the sight of men, but with *singleness of heart, as pleasing God*<sup>9</sup>. You will have before your eyes the Judgment Seat of Christ, and will hear with the ear of faith the blessed welcome of your Saviour, *Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord*<sup>1</sup>.

So much in reference to those who may be in part separated from us, but who, we trust, may one day

<sup>8</sup> Rom. xiii. 5.

<sup>9</sup> Col. iii. 22. Ephes. vi. 6.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxv. 21.

be united with us as brethren in the house of God, and in the bonds of Christian love, and be fellow worshippers with us in the Church glorified in heaven.

III. Let us now advert to ourselves.

1. We, my brethren, are members of the Church of England, and we believe that her doctrines and her ritual are in accordance with Holy Scripture. Many of us are persuaded, that, under God, the Church of England is now the main stay of pure religion in Christendom. We believe that the confiscation or curtailment of that sacred revenue which has been dedicated by the piety of many centuries for the public worship of God, and for the maintenance of His House, would be a fraud upon Him and a robbery of the poor, and that it would bring down His fearful judgments upon us. We believe that our duty is, not to surrender that tribute (Heaven forbid!), but to conjure those who would withhold it, to surrender their own erroneous notions with respect to it. We believe that to give up Church Rates would be to give away what is not ours to give; it would be to give up what does not belong to us, but appertains to God: it would be to betray the royalties of Christ. We believe that, morally, we cannot, even if we would, exempt any one from his obligation to pay them. We cannot permit any one to rob God's treasury. We cannot authorize sacrilege. We cannot deprive the Poor of their right. If any refuse to pay Church Rates, be it so. We shall deplore the refusal, for the sake most of those who refuse. But we cannot exempt them from the payment; we cannot give them acquittance of a debt due not to ourselves, but God. Nor may we flatter them that they are not guilty; for so we should be partakers in their sin, and *spread*

*a net for their feet*<sup>2</sup>. We must grieve over such a sin as that: we must protest against it, and leave the issue to God. We may *suffer* evil, but we must never *do* it. We may endure privations and calamities consequent on other men's transgressions, we may see others endure them, but we must not abet those transgressions or connive at them, lest we become transgressors also, and so make ourselves sharers hereafter in the punishments which await them.

2. Let us not be impatient; but rather than take a *false* step, let us take *no* step at all. Let us allow time for refutation of error and diffusion of truth—let us give scope for Reason to recover her sway, and for the healing and soothing influences of Prayer, of Divine grace, of the Example of Christ. In the opposition made to the payment of Church Rates in some populous places, let us recognize the consequences of our own neglect, in not having provided for the spiritual welfare of those places<sup>3</sup>; let us

<sup>2</sup> Prov. xxix. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Here is one difficulty, among others, which besets the plan which would exempt persons from Church Rates, on condition that they "*declare themselves Dissenters,*" and "*surrender all claim to the ministrations of the Church.*"

If the vast multitudes in our populous Cities had ever had any sufficient opportunities offered them of becoming sound members of the Church, there might be some reason in such a proposal as this.

But the Dissent of our large Cities is a Dissent of circumstances, rather than of principles. They have not had any means of being other than they are. And it would not be a wise or merciful course, —*to excommunicate them by anticipation,* before they have ever been invited to join in the Communion of the Church.

Let the Episcopate be planted in our large towns,—let Clergy and Churches and Schools be duly multiplied,—let voluntary efforts in the cause of Religion be encouraged by public aid,—let the Church be permitted and enabled to shew herself to be the spiritual

acknowledge that we are justly punished there by instruments of our own making; let us behold additional incitements to labour in the cause of Religious Restoration, in order that the multitudes there may be recovered to the knowledge and love of Christ, and to the blessings of unity. The best way of maintaining Church Rates is to strengthen and extend the Church. Let us not abrogate our Laws, because we have been wanting in our duty to them. But let us not abandon them, because some may break them with impunity. Let us not honour lawlessness, and discourage loyalty. Let not God's Houses throughout the land be despoiled, and left to fall into ruin, because some persons among us may refuse to give God His due. Let us not punish the innocent with the guilty. Though some violate the Law, yet, thanks be to God, many more love to obey the Law. Many hundreds of our Parishes rejoice to maintain their Churches by parochial assessments, and wisely believe that a blessing from Heaven is thus brought down upon them. They rightly feel that they would lose a privilege, if this work of parochial piety, inherited from their forefathers and hallowed by the prescription of centuries, were interrupted and imperilled by Law, instead of being confirmed, protected, and perpetuated by it.

Let us not make our rural Parishes to be the victims of the sins of some in our large towns. Let not our English peasantry be robbed of their spiritual birth-right—which is, to have their own venerable and loved Parish Church maintained for them—because our large

Mother of their population; and then,—if knowingly and wilfully any refuse her ministrations, and obstinately persist in heresy and schism, and in declining to pay Church Rates,—it may be time to think of inviting them to “register themselves as Dissenters,” and of excluding them as such from the offices of the Church.

cities have been neglected by us, and because some in those cities are deceived, and deceived others. Nor let us give up any of our large Towns as incurable, but let us do our duty towards them—not by flattering them in error, but confessing our own sins with regard to them, and by endeavouring to make them participate more fully in the blessings of spiritual ministrations. And though some of them be possessed by a spirit whose name is Legion, let us labour and pray, that, by God's blessing on His own means of grace, they may be delivered from the tyranny of the Evil One, and be brought *to sit at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in their right mind*<sup>4</sup>.

If we consent to the abrogation of the law, this blessed consummation can never be attained. Almighty God will confound us more and more. Religious unity will be impossible. Our unhappy divisions will be multiplied. We shall be split into countless factions. Ungodliness will overwhelm us as with a flood. But if we hold fast the *principle* of this Law<sup>5</sup>, through good report and evil report, then God will be with us, and bless our endeavours to maintain it; and perhaps the time may come, when some of those who now desire most eagerly to destroy the law, may thank us for maintaining it.

3. We are bound to speak, my brethren, the more earnestly on this subject, because we know full well what is involved in it. The question now at stake is, whether, as a Nation, we are to know any thing of Christianity? whether we are to have any national form of Religion, or no? This is the point at issue—as they know and openly declare who debate it with us<sup>6</sup>. If we

<sup>4</sup> Mark v. 15. Luke viii. 35.

<sup>5</sup> Some improvements may be made in the *application* of the law. See Note D, at end of this Discourse.

<sup>6</sup> The following avowal has been made by the most prominent

give up Church Rates, we must look calmly at the consequences. Let no one dream of peace if such a surrender is made. It will bring with it a train of other concessions, civil and ecclesiastical, succeeding one another in rapid march, and will probably endanger the existence of all privileges, spiritual and temporal. What may then become of one of our greatest national blessings—our Parochial system? What of our Tithe system<sup>7</sup>? What of the privileges of our Hierarchy? What of our public observance of the Lord's Day? What of our Protestant succession? What of any other religious institution or usage embodied in our Constitution? They may be all scattered to the winds. And when we have no National Form of religious belief, but all forms of religion are

leader of the opposition to Church Rates (Evidence before the Committee, p. 72):—

“I would say, for myself and others, that *we should deprecate above all things any legislative settlement of this vexed question of Church Rates, which would throw any portion of the Church Rate charges upon the public revenues, having in our own mind the separation of what I call Church and State, and believing that we have in these Church Rate battles the very best vantage-ground for advancing that question, which of all others is, in our estimation, the question of the age.*”

And again, p. 74:—

“But then I would wish to be clearly understood, that . . . I feel that *the great antagonism of Dissenters to an establishment, is better fought in Church Rate controversies; they afford them a better and more advantageous mode of exciting popular attention to the subject than any other.*”

<sup>7</sup> If the ancient obligation to provide for the maintenance of *Fabrics* assigned to a particular form of doctrine and worship has ceased (as some allege) by reason “of the prevalence of Dissent from that doctrine and worship,” shall we not soon hear of the cessation of the similar obligation to provide for the maintenance of the *Ministry* appointed to teach that doctrine and uphold that worship? i. e. will not the sacrifice of Church Rates entail the sacrifice of Tithes?



equally true or equally false in the eye of the Law—when every man is left to do what is right in his own eyes—if only he pleads conscience—then the Law will be powerless to exercise any salutary control over any form of religion, however monstrous it may be. We may see men masked with a vizor of piety perpetrating the greatest enormities. On one side we may hear blasphemies boldly uttered and impieties vauntingly avowed. We may behold the poisonous weeds of Mormonism and other forms of licentious fanaticism luxuriating rankly among us. In other places we may see *that* form of religion—the religion of Rome—which puts forth the boldest spiritual claims, and would arrogate universal empire over the conscience and will of man, wielding unconstrained sway, and exercising an arbitrary despotism, and bidding defiance to all law human and divine.

If we are to be saved from these calamities, we must not sacrifice the Truth. It is the lot of Truth to be assailed in this world; it would not be Truth if it were not assailed. The Truth, which we are now defending, has been attacked before, but it was courageously defended<sup>8</sup>, and those assaults were abated, and in many places have almost died away<sup>9</sup>. And if we are to give

<sup>8</sup> See particularly the Resolutions of the Archdeacons of England and Wales. Note E, at end of this Discourse.

<sup>9</sup> The following is from p. 473 of the Evidence on Church Rates.—The witness examined was Ralph Barnes, Esq.

“Is it your opinion that there is, generally speaking, a greater amount of objection to lawful authority now, and in the last twenty years, than there was previously in this country?—The particular excitement of that period has entirely *passed away*, and *as far as it shewed itself in objection to Church Rate, I mean to say, it does not exist at all in the diocese (of Exeter) now.*

“There is no objection in the diocese to Church Rates now?—*No objection at all to Church Rates on the general principle of parochial obligation to maintain the fabric of the Church.* [“Then

up every thing which is violently assailed, we shall soon have no rights to defend, and no blessings to enjoy. Better a thousand times that we ourselves perish, than give up our principles, “*Melius pereat unus, quam unitas.*” Better even that our religious fabrics should lie waste, than that the foundation of the Church herself should be destroyed. *For if the foundations are cast down, what shall the righteous do*<sup>1</sup>? If Christianity is to be preserved among us it will not be by concessions; but by firm, temperate, and charitable assertions of the truth. *Buy the truth, and sell it not*<sup>2</sup>. The blood of Martyrs was the seed of the Church; she grew by persecution, and she may be revived by suffering; but she cannot survive by surrender. Martyrdoms lead to Restorations, but Defections lead to Dissolution. A building, shattered by a violent convulsion, may yet be constructed again of the same materials, and may become more beautiful than before; but if its stones are calcined to powder, it can never be rebuilt with them. So a Church and Nation may receive violent shocks, and may seem to be prostrate, like an edifice flung down by an earthquake. And yet they may be restored; and in the maintenance of their principles they have a pledge of Restoration. But a Church and Nation, whose principles are pulverized by compromise, can never coalesce again; they will be spilt on the ground like water.

4. Therefore, in fine, my beloved brethren, for the

“Then what are the grounds of objection, if there are any?—I believe *if the law* was settled that the rate was enforcible by the Churchwardens, I could not say that the rates would be universal, but *I believe there would be scarcely any place where a rate would not be made.*”

The same is stated by the Archdeacon of Maidstone with regard to his Archdeaconry, and is doubtless true, of many other Dioceses—especially in rural districts.

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xi. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Prov. xxiii. 23.

sake of our children's children, let us be content to suffer, if God calls us to it, in the maintenance of Truth. For the sake also of those who are now unhappily estranged from us, and for the sake of those who are estranged from God, let us not flatter them in error and rivet them in wrong, by conceding the truth, and sacrificing the principles which we are commissioned to defend,—even for the sake of those who assail them,—and to hand down to posterity. For the sake of the Poor let us not give up their spiritual heritage. For the sake of God, let us not be accomplices in robbing His treasury. For the sake of the Church and Realm, for the sake of Christendom itself, let us not sacrifice a principle hallowed by the usage of many centuries. Let us not degrade England in the eye of Europe and the World, by imagining it possible that she should renounce that usage by which she has made provision for the public worship of Christ. *Let us not break His bonds asunder, and cast away his cords from us*<sup>3</sup>. If we do, He will *bruise us with a rod of iron, and break us in pieces like a potter's vessel*<sup>4</sup>. Let us not make a surrender, which will open the floodgates of lawlessness upon us. But let us hold fast that which is good, and pray for the spirit of patience, wisdom, courage, peace, and love. In the present storm of opinions let us look to Christ. Let us lift up our hearts to Him Who has the elements in His hands, and maketh the lightning and the thunder, and can control the wills of men. The sea is high, the night is dark, the wind is boisterous. But Christ is in the ship. He may appear to be asleep. But His Godhead never sleeps. He is now trying our faith in Him<sup>5</sup>. He is exercising our patience, and proving our obe-

<sup>3</sup> Ps. ii. 3.<sup>4</sup> Ps. ii. 9.<sup>5</sup> Matt. viii. 26. Mark iv. 40.

dience, by our difficulties. While asleep as man, He can still the waves as God. If we pray to Him and obey Him, and trust in Him, He will assuredly in due time arise, and quell the storm of passion and prejudice which is now swelling around us; and He will restore the calm of reason and of love, and bring us at length in peace to *the haven where we would be*.

## NOTES.

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### NOTE A.

#### *Repairs of Church obligatory on Parishioners by Common Law.*

LORD C. J. TINDAL, in giving judgment on the Braintree Case (Feb. 8, 1841), said :—

“ We are all of opinion that the obligation by which the Parishioners, that is, the actual residents within, or the occupiers of land or tenements in every parish, are bound to repair the body of the Parish Church whenever necessary ; and to provide all things essential to the performance of Divine Service therein, is an obligation imposed on them by the common law of the land.

\* \* \* \* \*

“ No trace can be found in any of our books of an obligation on parishioners to repair the Parish Churches throughout the whole of the realm, less wide and extensive than this. And as to the antiquity of this obligation, the case cited in argument from the Year Books, 44th Edward III., folio 18, whilst it establishes the fact that Church Rates were made by the parishioners at so early a period as the year 1370, does at the same time, by pleading a custom from time immemorial within the particular parish, to levy the amount of the rate on each parishioner by distress, necessarily carry back beyond the time of legal memory the obligation of the parishioners to make a rate upon themselves for the reparation of the Parish Church. And such a custom, existing beyond the time of legal memory, and extending over the whole realm, is no other than the common law of England.

“ Such being the law of the land, it follows, as a necessary consequence, that the repair of the fabric of the Church is a duty which the parishioners are compelled to perform, not a mere voluntary act which they may perform or decline at their own discretion ; that the law is imperative upon them absolutely that they do repair

the Church; not binding on them in a qualified limited manner only, that they may or may not repair as they think fit; and that, when it so happens that the fabric of the Church stands in need of repair, the only question upon which the parishioners, when convened together to make a rate, can by law deliberate and determine, is not whether they will repair the Church or not (for upon that point they are concluded by the law), but how and in what manner the common law obligation so binding them may be best and most effectually, and at the same time most conveniently, performed and carried into effect. The parishioners have no more power to throw off the burden of the repair of the Church than that of the repair of bridges and highways."

This judgment was published from Mr. Gurney's short-hand notes, as a separate pamphlet, Lond. 1841, Rivingtons.

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#### NOTE B.

##### *Arguments against Church Rates.*

THE following are statements by one of the most prominent Church Rate Abolitionists, and are contained in his evidence before the Select Committee on Church Rates, p. 48 (ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, July 15, 1851).

The first is the resolution proposed by him at Braintree. The terms of it are, "That all compulsory payments for the support of the religious services of any sect or people appear, to the majority of this vestry, to be unsanctioned by any portion of the New Testament Scriptures, and altogether opposed to, and subversive of, the pure and spiritual character of the religion of Christ. But that for any one religious sect to compel others which disapprove their forms of worship or system of Church government, or which dissent from their religious principles and creeds, to nevertheless submit to support and extend them, appears to this vestry to be a yet more obvious invasion of religious freedom, and violation of the rights of conscience; while also it appears to be a gross injustice to Dissenters, as citizens, to compel them to pay for the religious services of others in which they have no part, while they build their own chapels, support their own ministers, and defray the charges of their own worship. That compulsory Church Rates, and more especially such Rates upon Dissenters, thus appearing to be, as a tax, unjust, and as an ecclesiastical imposition, adverse to religious

liberty, and contrary to the spirit of Christianity, this vestry feels bound, by the highest obligations of social justice and of religious principle, to refuse to make a rate, and does refuse accordingly."

The following is another statement from the same quarter, p. 55:—

"Church Rate is not a charge upon lands and houses, but a tax upon persons, distributable according to their several abilities as measured by their obvious and tangible possessions; and therefore the refusal to lay a Church Rate is not the repudiation of a legal charge upon lands and houses, but it is the refusal to lay a tax distributable in a particular way, which tax, originally just, has become unjust. The principle of this tax was that all should contribute according to their relative abilities, to the support of their own religious services; by the prevalence of dissent its operation has become subversive of its original principle, because by it now Dissenters would become doubly charged, charged with the support of the religious services of which they are partakers, and charged also with the support of other religious services repugnant to them, and of which they are not partakers."

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NOTE C.

*On the Powers of the Ecclesiastical Courts, with regard to Church Rates.*

*Witness examined, Right Hon. S. Lushington, D.C.L.*

(Evidence, p. 295.)

"2341. HAVE the Ecclesiastical Courts, in your apprehension, the power to compel the making of a rate?—I should apprehend they had, if the question is put in that way. There is a very wide distinction between the case to which you originally referred, the Braintree Case, and the power of the ecclesiastical courts to proceed against a parish, and against individuals in that parish, until a rate is made; I apprehend that the original power which those courts exercised, still remains exactly as it did formerly, though it has not been carried into effect for a very great number of years. Perhaps I had better explain myself: I will take the case of a parish which obstinately refuses to raise a Church Rate at all; now the proper jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical court is not to say, 'You shall make a rate,' but its proper jurisdiction is to say to the parishioners at

large, 'You shall repair the church;' and if they do not repair the church, the two ancient remedies are, one to lay the parish under interdict, and the other to proceed against the recusant parishioners for refusing to concur in those means which were necessary to have the church repaired, but not specifically to make a rate; because if the parties choose to do the repairs without making a rate, then the duty and functions of the ecclesiastical courts are entirely at an end.

2342. "If the order of the ecclesiastical courts were disobeyed, what would be the consequences to the parties refusing?—Much depends (with great deference I say it) upon my being understood very accurately in this respect: if the ecclesiastical court is properly put in motion, and no mistake is made by the practitioners who endeavour to compel the repairing of a church, I believe that the ecclesiastical court has power to do it; but considering that these proceedings have been obsolete now for 150 or 200 years, there is a very great chance that there may be a miscarriage in some point of form, so that the power of the ecclesiastical courts would never be called into perfect effect.

2343. "If a great number of people were simultaneously to refuse to obey the order of the ecclesiastical court, would it still be likely that the ecclesiastical courts would carry into effect their extreme powers with regard to each and every one of such persons?—If a case could be put into this shape, that I ordered A., B., C., D., and so on, to repair, and they were contumacious, it would be my bounden duty to follow it up; it would not be a matter of choice with me; I should be bound, in that case, to pronounce them contumacious, to signify their contempt to the Chancellor, and the Chancellor would put them in prison.

2344. "Without any consideration of their numbers?—I must proceed against all. There would be of course a distinction, because I might not have the judgment asked against some."

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#### NOTE D.

##### *Suggestions for Improvement in the Levying and Collection of Church Rate.*

THE following paragraphs are from the "Report of His Majesty's Commissioners on Ecclesiastical Courts," A.D. 1831, printed, Lond. 1832, p. 123.



“ *Proposed alterations.*—In pursuing this branch of our inquiry we are led to suggest several alterations for the purpose of effecting the following objects:—

“ 1st. For upholding the Churches and Chapels of the realm, and providing them with all things necessary for the decent performance of Divine Service.

“ 2ndly. For defraying the expenses by just and equal Assessments.

“ 3rdly. For providing an easy and economical mode of recovering Rates.

“ 4thly. For setting at rest many doubtful questions, at present leading to litigation, and producing discontent.

“ We propose, that it should be made imperative on the Churchwardens, within a certain period after their appointment, to submit to Vestry an estimate of the expenses to be incurred in the ensuing year, together with a detailed statement of the items. That if the Vestry refuses to make a Rate, or make one for less than the Churchwardens require, it shall be competent for the Churchwardens, or either of them, to appeal to the next Quarter Sessions, who shall have power to make a Rate, or to confirm the Rate, or to increase the amount thereof to any sum not exceeding the Churchwardens' estimate. So also when any Rate is made by Vestry, it shall be competent to any parishioner to appeal to the Quarter Sessions, for the purpose of having the Rate quashed or modified. This power, we think, will be advantageously exercised by the Quarter Sessions.

“ And we therefore humbly recommend, that all Appeals against Church Rates be made to the Quarter Sessions for the County in which the Parish for which the Rate is made is situate; and that all Appeals against Rates made for Parishes within Cities or Towns which are Counties, should (except from Parishes within London) be to the nearest Quarter Sessions for the County.

“ To impose any restriction, by attempting to enumerate the items which should be provided for by Church Rate, we conceive would be a matter of great difficulty, and therefore it might be expedient simply to prohibit in general terms, the admission of any expense unconnected with the Church.

“ It is most probable that these regulations would be sufficient to ensure the due reparation of Churches and Chapels, and the provision of all things requisite for the due performance of the rites of the Church, especially as in almost all cases one of the Churchwardens is nominated by the Minister; but if still further measures should be deemed requisite, the Bishop or Archdeacon may be empowered, in cases of necessity, to cause an estimate to be pre-

pared, and by the Churchwardens submitted to the Vestry, with a similar appeal to the Quarter Sessions. With respect to Ireland, by a recent Statute<sup>1</sup>, a measure resembling this has received the sanction of the Legislature, and we think that it will be expedient to introduce it into England under certain modifications.

“All property forming a part of the Rectory is exempted from Church Rate, whoever may be the occupier. With this exception, Church Rate is imposed upon principles so closely resembling the rules in force for the making of Poor Rates, that no other substantial distinction can be discovered. Preserving the exemption to Church Property, we think it might be expedient that Church Rates should, for the future, be made upon the same assessment as the Poor Rates. The law has already provided effectual means for rendering that assessment just and equal; and by adopting the same standard for Church Rates, objections on account of inequality of assessment will be prevented. There are two remedies for enforcing the payment of Church Rates. When the amount to be recovered from an individual is less than 10*l.*, and the validity of the Rate not disputed in the Ecclesiastical Court, recourse may be had, under an Act passed in the 53rd year of George the Third<sup>2</sup>, to two Justices, who may enforce payment by distress. The Act last referred to requires to be amended. In other cases, the Ecclesiastical Court exercises jurisdiction.

“We should also recommend that the payment of Church Rate should be enforced by the same means and remedies as are now applicable by law to Poor Rates. There is no distinction between Rates for the maintenance of the Church and of the Poor which seems necessarily to call for a different mode of collection, nor do we anticipate any inconvenience from the adoption of this plan. It may be proper too to add that the removing these questions from the cognizance of the Ecclesiastical Tribunals appears to be a necessary consequence of our previous recommendations; for the Inferior Courts will cease to exercise jurisdiction, and in most questions of Church Rate, resort to the Provincial Courts would be attended with too much delay and expense.

“There remains another branch of this subject deserving attention; Churchwardens are, at present, compellable by the authority of the Ecclesiastical Court, to produce their accounts; but no examination of them can ever take place before that Jurisdiction; indeed even the production of them cannot be enforced, if they have been passed by Vestry. If the Vestry refuse to sanction any of the dis-

<sup>1</sup> 7 Geo. IV. c. 72.

<sup>2</sup> 53 Geo. III. c. 127.

bursements, as extravagant or unconnected with the Church, there is no practical remedy against the Churchwardens; even the recovery of moneys remaining in their hands cannot be easily accomplished. We think it would be advisable to assimilate Churchwardens in all these respects to Overseers of the Poor.

“Many minor regulations would also be requisite, all of which we do not attempt to set forth; but for example—Provision must be made for the case of large parishes divided into several districts, where, by ancient custom, many Churchwardens or Chapelwardens are elected, and those chosen for each particular district levy the quota fixed by custom upon that district. These cases are numerous in the North of England, and have of late years given rise to much dispute and embarrassment.”

The following statements were made, and opinions given in evidence before the Committee on Church Rates.

*Witness examined, W. Pritchard, Esq.*

748. “With reference to the question which has been put to you as to any better mode of collecting the Church Rate, are you aware of the mode recommended by the Commission in 1832?—Yes.

749. “That was to collect it as the Poor Rate is collected?—Yes, and to treat the Churchwardens as Overseers.

750. “Do you see any objection to that mode of collecting the rate; I am not speaking now of levying the rate, but of collecting it; do you see any objection to collecting the rate by the Overseers under the same law as the Poor Rate, with the same remedies; that would oust the jurisdiction of the Ecclesiastical Courts?—Yes, I cannot help thinking that the parties would benefit by avoiding litigation in the Ecclesiastical Courts; it is very expensive.

751. “By being relieved from the burden of going into the Ecclesiastical Courts?—I have no doubt they would be very glad to be relieved. . . . .

758. “Do you think that the County Courts, or the Courts of Quarter Sessions, which is what is recommended by the Commission, would be competent?—Yes, I think the County Courts would, but not the Quarter Sessions. I do not think the Quarter Sessions, looking at their general composition, so far as my observation has extended, have the same capability of deciding such questions as we have been considering to-day, as the judges of the County Courts.”

*Witness examined, A. C. Veley, Esq.*

1116. “Do you wish the Committee to understand that, in your

judgment, whether with or without much bitter feeling, the present system of Church Rates is such as admits of any considerable remedy with respect to the mode of rating, the mode of collecting, and the purposes to which they are applied?—The mode of rating appears to me to be perfectly fair and reasonable, assuming the obligation to repair which is laid down by every Judge on every bench in the kingdom, it being exactly the same as the mode of rating to the Poor Rate; I apprehend, therefore, there can be no objection to that. The mode of collection undoubtedly might be very much facilitated and improved; that is to say, the collection of it might be put on the same footing as the collection of the Poor Rate.

1117. “Collected with the Poor Rate, do you mean?—It might even be so; but I mean enforced before magistrates, and so on, in the same way and by the same process.

1118. “Without the process of the Ecclesiastical Courts?—Just so.

1119. “And with respect to the application, which was a third branch of the question, do you conceive that there can be any difference in any new law from that which prevails under the existing law?—There are legal powers already in existence for building new and additional churches; the only case in which, as it appears to me, an ordinary Church Rate should be applied to building is rebuilding where the church has been suffered to fall down; it appears to me that the application of Church Rates might be left.”

*Witness examined, Rev. C. Burney, M.A.*

1533. “Are you aware that in Scotland the liability to repair the church, the manse, and the school falls upon the owner of the land, and not upon the occupier?—I have understood that it does.

1534. “Have you formed any judgment, or can you form any judgment, whether, in your opinion, that would be a beneficial thing, rather than leaving it, as it is in England, upon the occupier?—It must be paid first by the occupier.

1535. “Supposing it is not, it need not be necessarily?—Suppose it rested upon every individual in the parish owning property, it must originally, I conceive, as a matter of convenience, be paid by the person who is on the spot. He would know very clearly that it is incident, through him, to the property, and so I conceive it is now.

1536. “Are you speaking of England?—Yes. I know a case in which a tenant farmer objected to pay Church Rate, the Church

Rate having been always levied in that parish before, and he having paid it. His landlord, who was the late Lord Western, who regularly kept an account upon all his farms of the out-goings, had charged that farm with 5*l.* a year for Church Rate. He said to his tenant, 'Now you object to pay the Church Rate, you shall not have your conscience wounded any more; I will take it upon myself, but charge it in the rent.'

*Witness examined, Right Hon. S. Lushington, D.C.L.*

2374. "Can you suggest to the Committee any mode in which the law of Church Rates can be improved?—My view of the case is this, that assuming you adopt the principle that all the inhabitants of this country, without distinction or regard to their different modes of faith, are and ought to be continued liable to contribute to the repairs of the church, you ought to do it by getting rid completely and entirely of your present system of Church Rates; that you ought to confine the rate, whatever it is, to these two items strictly, namely, the repair of the church and the finding things necessary for divine service; that you ought to have a rate for that made exactly in the same manner as you have a Poor Rate; and with respect to every thing else, you ought to leave that to be settled by the parishioners themselves, as best they may; if they choose to have stoves, if they choose to have organs, if they choose to have clocks, my opinion is, that it ought to be a matter of consent, and not of compulsory payment. I would make the Church Rate as simple as possible, confining it entirely to the repair of churches and to the finding things necessary for divine service; and if you did that, you would get rid of nineteen-twentieths of the opposition which you have now. . . . .

2435. "The principle being once settled, as you have said, of a general rate, that is, all over England, upon all persons without consideration of the difference of their religious opinions, do you see any better basis than the basis of the Poor Rate?—None whatever.

2436. "Do you see any thing against collecting such a rate as that Church Rate with the other local rates of the country, all or some?—None.

2437. "Under the name or character of a general rate?—I see no reason at all.

2438. "No doubt you are well enough aware of the provisions of the Poor Rate in general?—Yes.

2439. "Do you see any difficulty in applying to the Church

Rate, either collected by itself or collected with the other local taxes of the country, the general provisions of the poor law?—No, not generally, excepting that I see now, which I certainly was not aware of until very lately, that it has become customary to tax even downright paupers to the Poor Rate.

2440. "In that, perhaps, you would have your own opinion?—I have my own opinion.

2441. "You think it wrong?—I do.

2442. "But in respect to the mode of collecting and levying the Church Rate, do you see any impropriety in collecting and levying it as we do the Poor Rate?—No, on the contrary, the report of the Commission will be found to that effect; I think that that mode of levying the rate which is most just and most equal ought to be adopted, and which produces least litigation.

2443. "The Poor Rate is subject to an audit by law?—Yes.

2444. "In your judgment, would not an audit by law be an amendment of the administration of the Church Rate law?—Most assuredly. . . . .

2471. "The making of the rate, or the administration of the Church Rate law?—No, I do not think that I could add any thing to what I have stated; I should confine it, as I have said, to the repairs and necessaries; I should have it made upon the basis of the Poor Rate; I would have an audit, and in case of any dispute as to what amount was necessary, I would have a reference of the briefest kind, because I am sure that the subject-matter of expense would not admit of a protracted litigation or minute investigation, and it had better be done in some instances a little roughly, than for you to attempt to do it with precise accuracy, which could never be done, except at five times the expense of the rate itself."

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#### NOTE E.

*Resolutions of the Venerable the Archdeacons of England and Wales, concerning Church Rates, Jan. 13, 1837.*

AT a meeting of the Venerable the Archdeacons of England and Wales, and other ecclesiastical officers having archidiaconal jurisdiction, convened by a circular letter of the Archdeacons of the Diocese of London, and held in London on Friday the 13th of

January, 1837, for the purpose of considering what steps it may be necessary for them, as the constituted guardians of the fabric of parochial churches and chapels, to take relative to Church Rates, the Archdeacon of London in the chair, the Chairman reported that, notwithstanding the shortness of the notice, and absence of some of the parties from the place of their address, returns had been made from more than four-fifths of the Archdeacons of England; and the answers of the absent Archdeacons having been read, it was unanimously resolved :—

“That a national establishment of religion is the most effectual mode of conveying the blessings of the Gospel to the people at large.

“That in the very notion of a national establishment is implied a provision by the community of whatever is necessary for the due worship of Almighty God.

“That the piety of ancient times having consecrated certain endowments to the support of the Ministers of the Church of England, and provision having been made from the earliest periods for the maintenance of the Churches, and whatever else is necessary for the proper performance of Divine Service, by Church Rates, nothing more is required than additional enactments for better raising or making the rate, and for securing the rate-payer every possible satisfaction as to the faithful application of the money so raised.

“That, further, Church Rates being a rent-charge upon property, older by centuries than the title to the property on which it falls, the payment of such rates in their present form cannot be justly considered as a burden upon conscience; neither, on the other hand, could it be transferred from that which is now, and has been from time immemorial, legally rateable, to persons and property at present not liable, without violation of the sacred rights of property, and consequently not without violence to conscience rightly informed.

“That this Meeting thereby earnestly deprecates all interference with the principle of Church Rates; being persuaded that no other mode of attaining the same object, equally safe and permanent, can be devised.

“That, attempts having been long and perseveringly made, and of late with increased activity, to mislead and inflame the public mind on the subject, and to prepare the way for the total abolition of Church Rates, it is become the duty of the Archdeacons, as the constituted guardians of the fabric of the parochial churches and chapels, to take immediate measures for the counteraction of the same.

“ That a Committee be therefore appointed to take the necessary steps for such purpose, and that it consist of the Archdeacons of the diocese of London, and be open to all the Archdeacons of England and Wales, and all other Ecclesiastical officers having archidiaconal jurisdiction, with power to add to their numbers such persons as in their judgment may be likely to assist the object of the meeting.

“ That a subscription be now entered into for these purposes, and that the Archdeacon of Essex be the treasurer.

(Signed)

“ J. H. POTT, CHAIRMAN.”



# SERMON XL<sup>1</sup>.

## PART I.

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### ON DIVORCE.

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MATT. XIX. 9.

*“ Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery : and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.”*

THE Marriage Union is the source of household charities. If this fountain is preserved pure, the streams will be healthful ; but if it be sullied, it will pour forth waters of sin and sorrow, diffusing a baleful influence in Families and Nations.

Such calamitous results might reasonably be apprehended, if Marriage were only a Civil Contract. But it is a Divine Institution. Holy Scripture informs us that the First Man was made in the Divine Image, and that Woman was created by God out of Man. One Man, and one Woman, formed by God out of Man, composed the human family. And man, being taught of God, said of woman, *This is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh*<sup>2</sup>. And so near and dear was the in-

<sup>1</sup> This Sermon was preached at Westminster Abbey,—the former Part in the morning, the latter Part in the afternoon of Sunday, August 6, which may account for the recapitulation in the Second Part.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. ii. 23.

timacy thus cemented between the man and his wife, that it is declared in Holy Scripture to surpass even the filial relation; *For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh*<sup>3</sup>. Thus Marriage is an Institution coeval with the Creation; and the covenant made by God cannot be unmade by man; *What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder*<sup>4</sup>.

Marriage was thus beautified and sanctified at the beginning. And fresh honours awaited it at the second Creation, when Christ, Who had *made the world*<sup>5</sup>, came down from heaven to *make all things new*<sup>6</sup>. The eternal Word of God married our Nature, and joined it to the Nature of God. Being born of woman, He raised womanhood from its low estate. He, the Second Adam, formed to Himself a Church, the spiritual Eve, the mother of all living<sup>7</sup>, from His own wounded side, as He hung upon the Cross; and He represents the dearness of that union between Himself and the Church under the figure of Marriage. Christ is the Bridegroom<sup>8</sup>; the Church is the Bride<sup>9</sup>. *He gave Himself for her, and loveth and cherisheth her as His own flesh*<sup>1</sup>. And when she is purified from the taints of this careworn world<sup>2</sup>, she will be presented to Him *a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but prepared as a Bride adorned for her husband*<sup>3</sup>, in pure raiment, clean and white; and her espousals will be celebrated by Angels, and she will be for ever with the Lord.

Thus Christ by His Incarnation hallowed Wedlock,

<sup>3</sup> Gen. ii. 24. Matt. xix. 5.

<sup>5</sup> John i. 3. Heb. i. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Gen. iii. 20.

<sup>9</sup> Rev. xxi. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. v. 27.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xix. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Rev. xxi. 5.

<sup>8</sup> Matt. ix. 15. John iii. 29.

<sup>1</sup> Eph. v. 25.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xxi. 2.

and proclaims it to be a *great Mystery*<sup>4</sup>. Are we not therefore constrained to say, that if any thing impairs the strength or mars the beauty of the Marriage Covenant, it is no less than an offence against God Himself, and against our compassionate Redeemer? Is it not sacrilege? Will it not provoke His wrath, and be visited with the chastisements of Him, Who is King of Kings and Judge of all? Will not confusion in families and nations attend it in this world, and misery in that which is to come?

I. Such reflections as these, my brethren, are suggested by our present condition. In the last twenty years great changes have taken place among us with regard to the Marriage Contract<sup>5</sup>. Marriage may now be celebrated without any benediction from Him who instituted it; it may be performed like an act of worldly commerce and secular traffic.

And what has been the result? Almighty God seems now about to chastise us for our desecration of His holy Ordinance. He uses our Liberty as the instrument of our punishment. We have sought for and obtained facilities of Marriage; and we now seek for, and perhaps may obtain, facilities of Divorce. The conjugal knot can be tied so easily, that we now call for easy modes of untying it. Perhaps our profanation of Marriage may be punished by frequency of Divorce.

Hitherto, no Judicial Tribunal has been empowered in this country to dissolve the bond of Matrimony. Such Divorces as take place among us are effected by special Acts of the Legislature, and are consequently rare, and may be called penal privileges of the Rich<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Eph. v. 32.

<sup>5</sup> Especially by 6 & 7 Will. IV. c. 85.

<sup>6</sup> Between the Reformation and the end of the 17th century, i. e. for a period of 150 years, the whole number of Divorce Bills was

The Poor are exempt from them. We do not now enquire whether this is a right state of things. This is not the question before us; though the answer to it will be obvious from what may now be said. But such has been our condition for about a century and a half<sup>7</sup>.

II. But now an important change is meditated.

It is proposed that a special Tribunal should be constituted, with power to dissolve the Marriage Contract, under certain conditions; and that either of the parties who may be divorced by sentence of that Tribunal, should have licence to marry again<sup>8</sup>.

not more than three or four. In the eighteenth century they increased to 130; and the average of Divorce Bills in the last ten years has been about four a year.

<sup>7</sup> On this subject, in reference to England, see Reform. Legum De Adulteriis et Divortiiis, p. 49—58; Canons of 1597 (Cardwell, p. 154), Canons of 1604, cv., cvi., cvii.; Parl. Hist. vol. xxxv. p. 226—326, and the Report of the Recent Commission on the Law of Divorce, 1853, with Lord Redesdale's Protest.

<sup>8</sup> The provisions in the Measure referred to, are as follows:—

*Court of Divorce.*—XII. "The Lord Chancellor, the Lord Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench, the Master of the Rolls, and such three other Persons, one of whom shall always be one of the Judges of the Superior Courts of Common Law, as Her Majesty may from time to time appoint by Letters Patent under the Great Seal, or any three or more of them, of whom the Lord Chancellor and the Lord Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench, for one of the said Judges, shall always be two, shall constitute a Court, to be called *the Court of Divorce*, which said Court shall be and shall have all the privileges of a Court of Record, and shall hold its sittings at such times and places as it shall from time to time find expedient."

*Adultery of Wife. Incest or Bigamy by Husband.*—XVI. "It shall be lawful for any husband to present a petition to the said *Court of Divorce*, praying that *his marriage may be dissolved*, on the ground that his wife has since the celebration thereof been guilty of Adultery; and it shall be lawful for any wife to present a petition to the said Court, praying that *her marriage may be dissolved* on the ground that since the celebration thereof her husband has been guilty of incestuous adultery or bigamy," &c. &c.

*Decree dissolving Marriage.*—XXX. "In case the said Court shall be satisfied on the evidence that the alleged adultery, bigamy,

Here, then, is a subject of great importance to us all. The happiness of Families, the security of States, depend on the integrity of the Marriage Covenant. And, what is even of more moment, the eternal welfare of immortal souls is here at stake.

We may now be about to enter on a new career of social existence. It is, therefore, incumbent on us to enquire,—What is the doctrine of the Gospel concerning Marriage and Divorce?

Especially is it the duty of the Clergy,—*the Watchmen of the house of Israel*<sup>9</sup>,—to declare the counsel of God<sup>10</sup> in this matter, and they will not be *pure from the blood* of the souls of those committed to their charge, if they shrink from this duty.

Let us, then, consult the oracles of God, and hearken to the voice of Him Who instituted Matri-

&c. &c. has been committed, and shall not be satisfied that the complaining party has committed adultery during the marriage, or was in any manner accessory to or conniving at the adultery, bigamy, &c. complained of, and shall also be satisfied that such adultery, bigamy, &c. has not after the commission thereof been pardoned by the petitioner, then the said Court shall pronounce a *decree declaring such marriage to be dissolved*: provided always, that the said Court shall not be bound to pronounce such decree if the petitioner shall, in the opinion of the said Court, have been guilty of unreasonable delay in presenting or prosecuting such petition."

*Liberty to Parties to marry again.*—XXXVIII. "When the time hereby limited for appealing against any decree *dissolving a marriage* shall have expired, and no appeal shall have been presented against such decree, or if in the result of any appeal such marriage shall be declared to be dissolved, it shall be *lawful for the parties thereto to marry again, as if the prior marriage had been dissolved by the death of the other party thereto.*"

The Bill containing these provisions is endorsed, "Divorce and Matrimonial Causes, &c., Presented by the Lord Chancellor;" and was recently far advanced toward becoming the Law of the Land.

<sup>9</sup> Ezek. iii. 17; xxxiii. 7.

<sup>10</sup> Acts xx. 27.

mony, and has invested it with divine beauty, and made it the nearest of human relations, and has transfigured it into an image of love and felicity and glory, transcending any that was ever seen even in Paradise,—by consecrating it into a symbolical picture of His own espousals in Heaven.

III. Let us resort to Christ for instruction concerning Marriage;—let us sit at His feet,—and listen to His words.

1. “The Pharisees came to Him, *tempting* Him, and saying unto Him, *Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause*<sup>1</sup>?”

They came *tempting* Him: They had probably heard that He had declared to His disciples in the Sermon on the Mount<sup>2</sup>, “It hath been said, Whosoever shall *put away* his wife, let him give her *a bill of divorcement*: But, *I say* unto you, That whosoever shall *put away* his wife, *saving for the cause of fornication, causeth* her to commit *adultery*<sup>3</sup>.”

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xix. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. v. 31.

<sup>3</sup> The following is S. Chrysostom's comment on the passage (Hom. in Matth. lxii.), “Our Lord does not merely say that God made one man and one woman, but that He ordered that the one man should be joined to the one woman. And if God had been willing that the man should put away his wife and marry another, He would have made many women, when He made one man. But by the mode of His Creation and by the mode of His Legislation, God has declared that one man should continually dwell together with one woman, and never be put asunder. And observe how our Lord expresses this. He that made them at the beginning, made them male and female: that is, they sprang from one root, and formed one body,—for, He says, ‘they twain shall be one flesh.’ Our Lord then represents it as a fearful thing to despise this legislation, and when He establishes the Law, He does not say, Do not ye put asunder or separate those who are united, but He says, What *God* hath joined together, let not man put asunder.’ And if you allege the authority of Moses against Me (He may be supposed to say), I shew you the Lord of Moses, and I confirm what I say,

Doubtless this doctrine had a strange sound in the ears of the Pharisees. Their practice was to put away their wives for trivial causes ; and they imagined that such a custom could be justified by the law of Moses, as recited in the twenty-fourth chapter of Deuteronomy. They wished to persuade the people that the doctrine of Jesus was contrary to the Law of Moses, which was Divine ; and that therefore Jesus could not be a Prophet sent from God. And they imagined that they had now a fair opportunity of doing so. They resorted to an artifice like that employed by them on another occasion, when they brought to our Lord a Woman taken in adultery <sup>4</sup>. *Moses, in the law*, they then said, *commanded that such should be stoned ; but what sayest Thou ? This they said, tempting Him.* On *that* occasion they thought that they could shew that our Lord contravened the Law of Moses by laxity, and *now* they would prove that He contradicted it by severity. Our Lord, therefore, refers them to Moses himself. He sends them to the First

by priority of time. For, in the *beginning* God made them male and female. And this Law is the older Law, although it may seem to you to be now first promulgated by Me. But it was enacted in the beginning by God, yea, and with much solemnity. For He did not merely bring the woman to the man, but He commands him to leave father and mother for her sake ; and not only to come to his wife but to cleave unto her (*κολληθῆναι*), shewing by the word used the indissolubility of the bond ; and not only so, but He shewed a still more intimate union by saying, ‘ They twain shall be one flesh ’ (*εἰς σάρκα μίαν*). And our Lord proceeds to reiterate and ratify the Law by His own authority,—Wherefore they are no more twain, He says, but one flesh. As then it is a sacrilegious thing for a man to cut his own flesh (Lev. xxi. 5), so is it unlawful for him to put away his wife. And He says, ‘ What *God* hath joined together, let not man put asunder,’ shewing that to put away a wife is contrary to nature,—for by it the one flesh is divided—and it is against the Law of God, for it is a putting asunder of what has been joined together by Him.”

<sup>4</sup> John viii. 3.

Book of Moses. Are ye so little versed in the writings of Moses, *have ye not read* what he records in the first page of those writings, concerning the institution of Marriage? *God made them male and female, and said by Adam's voice teaching all his children, that for this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and cleave unto his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh. . . . What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder*<sup>5</sup>.

*Why then, replied the Pharisees, did Moses command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away*<sup>6</sup>?

Moses did *not command* any one to put away his wife. No; Moses taught you, in the Book of Genesis, what Marriage is. He shewed you that God made in the beginning but one man and one woman; and that, in order to declare their intimate union, God made Woman out of Man; and that Adam signified that origin even by her name<sup>7</sup>. . . . "She shall be called *Woman*, because she is taken out of *man*<sup>8</sup>." Have ye not read these things? Did not God Himself write them by the hand of Moses? . . . But because, when

<sup>5</sup> Ab exordio conditionis humanæ (says St. Jerome, adv. Jovianian.) *non dabamus repudium*.

<sup>6</sup> It will be seen on examination of the original words in Deut. xxiv. 1, that the command is hypothetical, i. e. *if* they put away their wives, they must use a particular form, not *oral*, but, *in writing*; which supplied time for deliberation, and being written by a certain class, under certain conditions, gave occasion for dehortation from wise and grave persons. See S. Aug. c. Faust. xix. 26, who well says, "Non ait Dominus 'Qui voluerit, dimittat uxorem suam;' sed utique *nolebat* dimitti uxorem a viro, Qui hanc interposuit moram ut in discidium animus præceps *libelli conscriptione* refractus absisteret, et quid mali esset uxorem dimittere cogitaret;" and because these *libelli* could only be written by advisers learned in the law. See also Buxtorfii Synagog. Jud. c. xl.

<sup>7</sup> Gen. ii. 23.

<sup>8</sup> *Ishah*, Hebr. Woman, from *Ish*, Hebr. Man. So *Virgo* from *Vir*.



He spake, ye would not hearken, therefore He punished you for the hardness of your hearts. He did not resist your obstinate and rebellious waywardness ; He *suffered* you to put away your wives. He *chose your delusions*, and *corrected* you by your own *wickedness*<sup>9</sup>, that ye might see that *wherein a man sinneth therein he is also punished*<sup>10</sup>. He did this in the same way as God gave Balaam leave to go, and punished him by means of his journey ; and as He gave the Israelites a king in His anger, and punished them by the king they had chosen. *For with the holy, O Lord, Thou shalt be holy, and with a perfect man Thou shalt be perfect. With the clean Thou shalt be clean, and with the froward Thou shalt learn frowardness*<sup>1</sup>.

Therefore, for the *hardness of your hearts*, Moses *suffered* you to put away your wives. But this was a mark of *your own degeneracy*. For from *the beginning it was not so*. And I am come to bring things back to what they were at the beginning. I am come to soften your hard hearts. If ye will listen to Me, and not rebel against My Spirit, I will *take away your stony heart, and give you a heart of flesh*<sup>2</sup>. Think not that I am come to destroy the Law. No ; I am come to awaken its dumb voice, and to quicken its dormant Spirit, and to write it on your hearts, softened by divine grace. Think not to set the Law against the Gospel, and Moses against Christ. The Law is fulfilled in the Gospel, and Moses is perfected in Christ. Now, therefore, hearken to Him Who knows your thoughts, and will reply to them, because He is God, and Who is the Author of the Law, and is come to restore and consummate it. For before Moses was, I am. *I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, com-*

<sup>9</sup> Isa. lxvi. 4. Jer. ii. 19.

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xviii. 25.

<sup>10</sup> Wisd. xi. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Ezek. xi. 19.

*mitteth adultery; and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.*

IV. Such, then, is the sentence of Christ. Let us consider it attentively.

“Whosoever shall *put away* his wife, except it be for *fornication*, and shall marry another, *committeth adultery.*”

Here a question arises first, What does our Lord mean by *putting away*? Does He mean Divorce,—that is, dissolution of the marriage bond? or only separation of the parties<sup>3</sup>, without such dissolution?

V. This question may be answered as follows:—

1. By reference to the enquiry of the Pharisees. Is it lawful to *put away* for any cause? By *putting away* they did *not* mean *separation* only of the parties, they meant *dissolution of the alliance*. They meant Divorce. They referred to the bill of divorcement, which was called a Bill of *cutting off*<sup>4</sup>, and which dissolved the marriage bond, with a view to a second alliance<sup>5</sup>. Our Lord was replying to their question; He used the same word as they had used, and He used it in the same sense. He is, therefore, speaking of *Divorce*.

2. Again, the word used throughout this passage, and in the parallel one, in the Sermon on the Mount, for putting away, is ἀπολύω, a word which always signifies in the New Testament (as its etymology suggests),

<sup>3</sup> As the Divines of Rome assert, e. g. Bellarmine de Matrimonio, Christus non loquitur de dimissione quoad vinculum, sed solum quoad thorum, quando concedit dimissionem in causâ fornicationis. So also Perrone.

<sup>4</sup> Deut. xxiv. 1. כִּפָּר בְּרִיתָתָא libellum *excidii*, quasi conjugii *scissionis*; a radice כָּרַת *discidit*.

<sup>5</sup> See the form in Buxtorfii Synagoga Judaica, cap. xl. “Licita esto nubere cuivis alii viro, et hinc habe tibi libellum expulsionum.” See also Grotius on Matth. v. 31, and Hammond on Divorce, Works, i. p. 595, ed. Lond. 1684.

to *loose from a bond*. Hence, again, we are brought to the conclusion that our Lord is speaking of *Divorce*: and His judgment is, that whosoever divorceth his wife, except for *one* cause—that of fornication—and marrieth another, committeth adultery.

VI. But here an important question presents itself.

1. Our Lord appears here to specify one cause,—and one only,—for which the marriage bond may be dissolved, and a new alliance contracted. And in like manner, He says in His Sermon on the Mount, in the fifth chapter of St. Matthew (ver. 32), “Whosoever shall put away his wife, *saving* for the *cause of fornication*<sup>6</sup>, causeth her to commit adultery.”

2. The expression is remarkable: “Whosoever putteth away his wife, save for one cause, committeth adultery.”

Our Lord *affirms* that a man *is* guilty of adultery if he puts away his wife for any other cause.

But He *does not affirm* that a man does well if he puts away his wife *for this cause*. Still less does He *recommend* such a divorce.

All that can be said in this case is, that our Lord does *not forbid* a man to put away his wife in that one predicament.

And neither here, nor in any part of the Gospel, does our Lord permit a woman to put away her husband, and marry another. On the contrary, He says, “If a woman shall put away her husband, and be *married to another, she committeth adultery*<sup>7</sup>.”

This is worthy of attention.

At the same time it may be *inferred*, that a man is *not* guilty of adultery if he puts away his wife in *that*

<sup>6</sup> Our Lord uses the word *πορνεία*, and not *μοιχεία*, because *πορνεία* “comprehends those other sins of incest, &c.” which *μοιχεία* did not. Cf. Hammond on Divorce, p. 600.

<sup>7</sup> Mark x. 12.

special case; just as from our Lord's saying, "*Except ye repent ye shall perish,*" it may be reasonably *inferred* that we shall not perish if we do repent.

VII. Such, then, is our Lord's decree, as gathered from two places in the Gospel of St. Matthew.

And now let us observe, that His sentence on this subject is recorded by two other Evangelists, St. Mark and St. Luke, and it is remarkable that in *neither* of those two Evangelists is *any exception* specified. But the prohibition of Divorce is general and absolute. In St. Matthew, as we have seen, our Lord says twice, "Whosoever putteth away his wife, *save for fornication*, and marrieth another, *committeth adultery*, or causeth her to *commit adultery.*" But, in St. Mark<sup>5</sup> and St. Luke<sup>9</sup> He declares, without any such reservation, that "*Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery.*"

VIII. Here, at first sight, appears to be a discrepancy. How is it to be accounted for?

The Church of Rome hence argues that the exception specified in St. Matthew's Gospel was afterwards overruled and superseded by our Lord's general declaration in St. Mark and St. Luke; and that in *no case whatever* can the marriage bond be dissolved<sup>1</sup>.

And yet, notwithstanding this, she has often given dispensations<sup>2</sup>, annulling the marriage contract<sup>3</sup>; and

<sup>8</sup> Chap. x. 11.

<sup>9</sup> Chap. xvi. 18.

<sup>1</sup> See Concil. Trid. Sess. xxiv. Canon 7. Catechism. Trident. Pars ii. cap. viii. Qu. 20. Vinculum matrimonii divortio dirumpi non potest.

<sup>2</sup> See Sandys, *Europæ Speculum*, p. 41, ed. 1673; and also dispensing with the Divine Law, and allowing those to marry who are prohibited thereby, see Reform. Legum, De Gradibus in Matrim. c. 3, p. 47.

<sup>3</sup> And she anathematizes those who deny that she has the power of devising other causes than God has ordained in His Word as impediments to Matrimony, or for the dissolution of it. Concil.

she even teaches, that, if one of two married persons has taken a monastic vow, the marriage tie is thereby severed<sup>4</sup>; and she commands that Priests who are married should be divorced<sup>5</sup>. And yet, at the Council of Trent, in the year 1563, she went so far as to pronounce an anathema on all who say that she is in error when she affirms that the marriage bond is indissoluble.

But what then, my brethren, shall we say concerning this seeming disagreement in the Evangelists? Let us pray to God for grace, and carefully examine His Word, and we shall find that this obscurity will become to us a source of light and guide us on the path of duty.

How, then, shall we proceed?

1. Let us observe, the question in St. Matthew is<sup>6</sup>,

Trident. Sess. xxiv. Can. 3. Si quis dixerit non posse Ecclesiam constituere ut plures gradus impediunt aut dirimant (quam qui in Levitico exprimuntur), anathema sit. And again, Can. 4. Si quis dixerit Ecclesiam non potuisse constituere impedimenta *matrimonium dirimentia* vel in iis constituendis errâsse, anathema sit.

<sup>4</sup> Can. vi. Si quis dixerit matrimonium ratum, non consummatum, per solemnem religionis professionem alterius conjugum non dirimi, anathema sit: i. e. if, after the nuptial knot has been tied in facie Ecclesiæ, one of the parties goes off to a Monastery, instead of going home with the other party, the tie is dissolved. Or, if one of the parties has made a *profession of religion*, before the marriage, the marriage is dissolved, or rather, the knot is not tied. And even after the consummation of marriage, if both parties went into a Monastery, the Marriage was dissolved *quoad vinculum*. See Lyndwood, Provinc. p. 128; and see Bp. Barlow, Cases of Conscience, p. 70, on the Pope's dispensing Power in dissolving Marriage. It is not easy to see how such decrees, enforced with an anathema by the Council of Trent, are consistent with the doctrine that the Marriage tie is indissoluble.

<sup>5</sup> Contracta matrimonia ab hujusmodi personis disjungi. Conc. Lat. i. c. 21, and Lat. ii. Decret. Dist. 27. c. 8. Barrow, in Christian Institutes, iv. 240.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. xix. 3.

“Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?”

No, is our Lord’s reply, *not for every cause*, as is your practice. And then He specifies *one* cause in which it is *not forbidden*.

But in St. Mark the question is general. *Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife?* which is met by a general answer, *Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her*<sup>7</sup>. And so in St. Luke<sup>8</sup>.

2. On the one hand, we must not imagine that any thing spoken by our Lord to His disciples, and recorded by the Holy Spirit in any one of the Gospels, can be superfluous. We must not suppose that any thing in the Sermon on the Mount is obsolete. Nor may we use one Gospel for the subversion of another. Christ foreknew that the Holy Spirit would write all the four Gospels; and He spake accordingly. And what Christ spake, and what the Holy Ghost, Who was sent by Christ, has written as spoken by Him, must be received by us as it was spoken by Christ, and as it is written in the Gospels by the Holy Ghost. The wings of the four Evangelical Cherubim are closely interwoven, and we must not endeavour to separate them. The four Gospels make one Gospel.

3. Therefore, on the one hand, we may not say with the Church of Rome, that the exception specified by Christ, and recited twice by St. Matthew, is *no* exception at all.

4. On the other hand, we must remember that these words, “Whosoever putteth away his wife, *except* for fornication,” have a peculiar character. They do *not*

<sup>7</sup> Mark x. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Mark x. 11.

<sup>9</sup> Chap. xvi. 18.

contain a *precept*, nor even, *directly*, a *permission*. The most that can be said of them, is, that Divorce, which is prohibited in *all* other cases, is *not* prohibited in that one case. And so by implication it may be said to be tolerated in that case. But let us remember that “God approves much more than He commands, and disapproves much more than He forbids<sup>1</sup>.” In *no case* does God *approve* Divorce. And may we not say that in all cases He regards it with disapprobation? For Christ has expressly declared in general terms, in the Gospel of St. Matthew, in the chapter before us, *What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder*<sup>2</sup>. He thus intimates His general desire, and gives His universal counsel, that the husband should not proceed to a Divorce, and to a second Marriage, but that a place should be left for repentance and reconciliation. This conclusion is confirmed by our Lord’s teaching and practice on other occasions. He did not reject the penitential sorrow of the woman who had been a sinner, but even allowed her to minister to His own blessed body<sup>3</sup>. And when He wrote with His finger on the ground, and when He said to the woman taken in adultery, *Go, and sin no more*<sup>4</sup>, He seemed to indicate the hardness of the hearts on which He had written His law concerning Marriage, and He intimated a desire that, on her sincere repentance, a door might be open to forgiveness and reconciliation, and that the bond of Marriage might not be broken by Divorce.

Such was the general desire of Christ.

5. And now let us see, my brethren, how beautifully this desire is brought out in the fact, which before

<sup>1</sup> Hooker III. viii. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xix. 6. Mark x. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Luke vii. 37—39.

<sup>4</sup> John viii. 11.

perhaps may have perplexed us—that the *exception* recited by St. Matthew is *not* mentioned in the two other Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke. How instructive is this omission! How eloquent is this silence! You perceive how it is to be interpreted. Not that Christ has revoked the permission, or rather the *non-prohibition*, in St. Matthew. Not that He unsays in one Gospel what He has said in another. No. He is the *Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last*<sup>5</sup>, the eternal Yea and Amen. *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but His words shall never pass away*<sup>6</sup>. Nor, again, that the Holy Ghost had forgotten what Christ said. He was sent to *bring to the remembrance of Christ's disciples all that He had said to them*<sup>7</sup>. No. But for an admirable purpose, which ought to be borne in mind by us. We must take all the Gospels together. Observe what instruction may be derived from their diversity and from their unity. We see in St. Matthew that a man may not divorce his wife, and marry another, save for a particular sin. He is, therefore, not forbidden to divorce her for *that* sin. *If* we had St. Matthew's Gospel *alone*, we might perhaps imagine that Christ *approves* what He does not forbid. We might perhaps have said that He looks with complacency on Divorce and re-Marriage in one particular case; and thus we should see Him opposed to the God of the Old Testament, Who made the man and the woman to be *one flesh* and *hateth putting away*<sup>8</sup>. But by God's goodness, we have two other Gospels, those of St. Mark and St. Luke. They supply what he omits; they supply, even by omis-

<sup>5</sup> Rev. i. 8.<sup>6</sup> Luke xxi. 33.<sup>7</sup> John xiv. 26.<sup>8</sup> Gen. ii. 24. Mal. ii. 16. After all that has been written on this text, this appears to be its true sense. See Drusius and W. Lowth, *ad locum*, and Grotius, in Matth. v. 31.



sion—as here. In them it is said absolutely that “whosoever divorceth his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery.” And why? Not because Christ has changed His mind, and forbids now what He had not forbidden before, but in order to teach us that God will be better pleased with us<sup>9</sup> if we abstain from doing that which He does not forbid us to do<sup>1</sup>.

This conclusion is confirmed by the authority of the Holy Spirit speaking by St. Paul<sup>2</sup>. *Unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord* (that is, in the Gospels, as we have seen), *Let not the wife depart* (or procure a Divorce) *from her husband. But and if she depart* (or be put away upon any cause), *let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband. And let not the husband put away his wife*<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> S. Augustine thus speaks (De Diversis Quæstion. lxxxiii. vol. vi. p. 138): Dominus dimittendæ conjugis solam causam fornicationis admittit. . . . And he quotes St. Paul, 1 Cor. vii. 10—13: Ubi etiam intelligitur quod si unâ illâ causâ, quâ solâ relictio conjugii permittitur, mulier a viro recesserit, *innupta perseverare debet*; aut si se non continet, viro potius reconciliari vel correcto vel certe tolerando, quàm alteri nubere. Sequitur autem et dicit, et *vir uxorem non dimittat*, breviter eandem formam intimans in viro, quam præcipiebat in fœminâ.

<sup>1</sup> One very strong reason for which divorces for adultery with a view to second marriages are inexpedient has been well stated by S. Augustine ad Pollent. de Conjug. Adulter. ii. 18, “Ne discant *vir* uxores suas, quas propter alias innumerabiles causas ferre non possunt, *mæchari cogere*, ut, ab eis vinculo conjugali per fornicationem, sicut putas, soluto liceat eis alteras ducere.” In corroboration of this remark, it is observable that Lord Eldon stated (May 16, 1800, in the House of Lords), “That nine out of every ten cases of adultery that came into the courts below, or that bar, were founded in the most *infamous collusion*,” i. e. between husband and wife.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 10, 11.

<sup>3</sup> Where see the note in Bp. Fell's Paraphrase, reprinted by Dr. Jacobson, at Oxford, 1852. “The being forsaken upon any cause, not dissolving the bond of Matrimony, *warrants not the*

IX. Thus the *exception* in St. Matthew, and the *omission* of it in St. Mark and St. Luke, when considered together, convey to us Divine instruction. The Evangelic records are in perfect harmony. They teach us by their voices—and teach us by their silence. And happy would it be for the world if its ear were duly attentive to the heavenly music of their holy wisdom. How peaceful would be the state of families! How loving would be the intercourse of Husbands and Wives, of Parents and of Children! And this harmony of homes would diffuse itself in ever-enlarging circles in Cities and in Nations, and throughout the World. Then those sins would be unknown which now bring shame and anguish upon families; and which, if they are not checked, but grow more strong, and extend themselves more widely among us, will spread misery and ruin, and bring down God's wrath upon us as guilty of profaning that holy Ordinance which He instituted at the Creation, and which has been adorned with new dignity by His beloved Son. May He pour His grace into our hearts, and teach us to see, and enable us to do His Will! May He rescue us from impending dangers, and lead us in the path of Truth and Love! We have been united to Christ. He has espoused our Nature. And by the Baptismal covenant our souls have been

*innocent party to marry again*; as is clear from 1 Cor. vii. 11. 39. Matt. v. 32.

“And in the other case, namely, whether Adultery dissolves Matrimony, and so the innocent party may re-marry . . . . the gift of continency is not wanting in the husbands or wives, being corporally diseased or otherwise debilitated. And *it would be a great temptation to commit Adultery, if thus they can dissolve the wedlock they dislike, and enter into another they lust after.* While it is granted that the unjustly divorced or dismissed are here prohibited any such liberty. And since these are not denied the gift of continency in their celibacy, neither are the other.”

joined in holy wedlock to Him. *I have espoused you, says the Apostle, as a chaste Virgin to Christ*<sup>4</sup>. May that Marriage-union be indissoluble! But, let us remember, there is one cause of rejection—unfaithfulness. Let us be true to Christ, and know no other Lord but Him. Then we may derive comfort from His Divine Words. He desires that the Marriage covenant between us and Himself should be eternal. He has no bills of Divorce for the faithful soul. He hateth putting away. If, then, we are true to Him, nothing can pluck us out of His hand. But while we remember His Love, let us not forget His Purity. *Be ye holy, for I am holy. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.* Into that pure region, where the Marriage of the Lamb will be solemnized, nothing unclean can enter, nor that loveth and maketh a lie<sup>5</sup>. Let us therefore tremble as well as rejoice. Let us take heed, and watch and pray that we may be led by the light of Love, and may *perfect holiness in the fear of God*<sup>6</sup>.

X. Thus we may mount by an angelic ladder from a right understanding of earthly Marriage to a true knowledge of that wedlock which is heavenly, spiritual, and eternal. We may ascend from the type to the antitype; from the first Adam to the second; from Eve in the garden of Eden to the Universal Church in glory; from the Institution of Marriage in Paradise to its final consummation in Heaven.

Whosoever shall *put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery.* This part of our Lord's doctrine on this question has now engaged our attention. The second

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 2.<sup>5</sup> Rev. xxii. 15.<sup>6</sup> 2 Cor. vii. 1.

portion still remains to be considered: *Whoso marieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.*

This, with the Divine permission, may be reserved for the afternoon.

Let us now approach the Lord's Table, that we may be joined in holy fellowship with one another, and may dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; and that by a holy union with Him in that Marriage Feast instituted by Himself we may be the better prepared and qualified by His grace to be one with Him, for ever and ever. Amen.

# SERMON XL.

## PART II.

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### ON DIVORCE.

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MATT. xix. 9.

*“ And whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.”*

WHAT is the teaching of our Blessed Lord concerning Marriage and Divorce, is a question that demands attentive consideration at all times, and which, as we have seen, derives especial importance from the circumstances in which we ourselves are placed. Accordingly, we have been engaged in examining the purport of His reply to the Pharisees, *who came to Him, tempting Him, and saying unto Him—Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause*<sup>1</sup>?

For a reply to that question, He referred them to the original institution of Marriage in Paradise. He reminded them that Almighty God made *them male and female*—that He formed Woman out of Man—so that they twain were one flesh; teaching thereby that what *God had joined together man should not put asunder.*

Thus, in God's will and desire, Marriage is indissoluble, and Divorce impossible. . . . But Moses, they

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xix. 3.

rejoined, was sent by God. Why then did he, the minister of God, *command to give a bill of Divorce, and to put her away?* Moses, said Christ, did *not command* to put away. But God visited you with His anger for contempt of His Law, He gave you over to a reprobate mind, He chastised you for your sacrilegious desecration of Marriage His own Institution, by suffering you to put away your wives, and thus to deprive yourselves of those blessings which are not otherwise secured than by the maintenance of the Marriage-bond inviolate; and to plunge yourselves in those miseries which break like a deluge on Nations when they are chastised by facilities of Divorce.

Thus God punished the Jews by their own licentiousness. A solemn warning, my brethren, to ourselves. We have degraded Marriage to a civil contract. Have we not, therefore, gone beyond the Jews? They knew, or might know, that Marriage was instituted by God. But they did not, and could not, know what we know, that Marriage has been consecrated by Christ. They had Moses and the Prophets. We have Christ and the Apostles, and they have taught us that Marriage is a great mystery<sup>2</sup>, a sacramental symbol, “signifying to us the Spiritual Union and Marriage betwixt Christ and His Church.” Have we not, therefore, reason to fear lest God should punish us for contempt of Marriage, as He did the Jews—by frequency of Divorce, and by its consequent calamities?

Let us, then, retrace our steps in fear. Let us endeavour to raise our minds to a due sense of the dignity and sanctity of Marriage. Let us hearken to the teaching of Him by whom all things were made, and Who instituted Marriage at the Creation, and

<sup>2</sup> Eph. v. 32.

hallowed it anew when He espoused our Nature, and betrothed to Himself the Church as His Bride, and became our Emmanuel,—God with us.

*Whosoever, He says, shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery.*

I. From this passage, compared with His words in the Sermon on the Mount, and in the two Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke, we have been brought to two conclusions ;

1. That in all cases, save one, Christ *forbids* Divorce and re-Marriage : and condemns them as no less sinful than adultery.

2. That in *no* case does He *approve* Divorce and re-Marriage, but rather *dissuades* it, even in the single case supposed.

Having been led to these conclusions, let us now proceed to consider the remaining precept in our Lord's Discourse on this subject.

II. "*Whoso marrieth her which is put away, committeth adultery.*"

What did He intend by this declaration ?

To this question, different replies are made from different quarters ;

1. On the one hand, it is affirmed by some—particularly by Divines of the Church of Rome,—that our Blessed Lord is not here speaking of Marriage with a woman *divorced* from her husband, but of Marriage with a woman *separated* from her husband<sup>3</sup> ; but so separated, that the Marriage-bond has not been broken by the separation.

For—say the divines of Rome—if our Lord were here speaking of a woman that has been divorced,

<sup>3</sup> "A mensâ et thoro." See above, p. 210, and p. 212, *note*.

such a one, being *divorced*, is *no longer* any one's *wife*, and therefore is capable of contracting Marriage; and therefore our Lord would not have said that whosoever marrieth her is guilty of *adultery*.

This is a specious argument, but not sound.

For, let us observe, the whole question here was concerning *Divorce*. The Pharisees came to our Lord, tempting Him, and asking Him, Is it lawful for a man to *put away* his wife for every cause? It is confessed by all that by *putting away* the Pharisees here meant *Divorce*—dissolution of the Marriage-bond. This is further evident from their other question, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of *Divorcement*, and to *put her away*? This is also clear from the word used by the Holy Spirit in this and the other Gospels, and which, in our translation, is rendered for to *put away*. That word<sup>4</sup> signifies, to *dissolve a bond*. And it is unquestionable that our Blessed Lord *is* speaking of such a dissolution when He uses this word in the *former* member of the verse. “Whosoever shall *put away* his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery.” Here, undoubtedly, He means “*Divorce*.” And it is by no means probable that our Lord, having used this word in the sense of *Divorce*—its natural and necessary sense—in the former member of the sentence, would *not* use it in *that* sense, but in another very different sense, in the latter member of the sentence. We are, therefore, obliged to conclude, that, as this word signifies *Divorce* at the beginning of the verse, it has also the same signification at the end of it; and that our Lord's sentence is, “that whosoever marrieth a woman that has been *divorced*, committeth adultery.”

<sup>4</sup> ἀπολύω. See above, p. 210.



2. But here we are constrained to notice an interpretation propounded by some other Interpreters of a different persuasion.

It is as follows: Our Lord has affirmed that whoso putteth away his wife, except it be for fornication, and marrieth another, is guilty of adultery. And what follows? According to these Expositors He proceeds to say that, Whoso marrieth her that is put away *for any other cause than fornication*, committeth adultery; and, by consequence, he that marrieth one that has been put away for *that sin* doth *not* commit adultery.

Unhappily this interpretation has been put forth with the sanction of some few celebrated names<sup>5</sup>, and has

<sup>5</sup> E. g. Le Clerc, Dr. Samuel Clarke, and the Author of a Treatise, entitled, "Nuptiæ Sacræ," Lond. 1821, 2nd ed. The author of the last-named treatise thus writes, p. 57, "By such a (second) marriage a woman will commit adultery. And why? Because the tie of the first husband still continues. But how does it continue? If she had committed fornication (a just cause of divorce) it would have been dissolved, but it now holds, because she is innocent of that offence which alone could liberate her, and therefore is still his wife." As an appeal is made to S. Chrysostom, in p. 57, of the Essay, entitled, "Nuptiæ Sacræ," it is due to that great and holy bishop to state his opinion in his own words. The reader may see above, p. 206, his exposition of the former part of the verse, the following paragraphs (from S. Chrysostom's XVIIth Homily on St. Matthew) refer to the latter. "He who marrieth a woman that has been put away committeth adultery. By taking her who is another man's wife away, he is guilty of adultery. And do thou here reply that he cast her off,—for though cast off, she remains the wife of him who cast her off. And lest our Lord should lay all the responsibility on the man who cast her off, and so make the woman more wilful, He shuts against her the door of any one who might receive her after being cast off. For by saying, He that marrieth a woman that has been put away committeth adultery, our Lord makes the woman chaste, even though against her will, by altogether blocking up against her all ingress to any other man (*πρὸς ἕτερον ἄνδρα πάντως ἀποτειχίζων εἰσοδὸν αὐτῇ*), and not allowing her to give occasions to her husband of petty jealousies. For the wife having learnt that it is absolutely necessary for her to

obtained some credence and currency among us in modern times. It was therefore necessary to mention it.

But this interpretation is not supported by the judgment of Christian Antiquity, and appears to be very erroneous.

For (1) the words, 'for any cause save fornication,' are not here repeated in the text of the Evangelist, who says simply, *He that marrieth her that is put away committeth adultery.*

(2) When we examine the sacred text of the original, in this passage of St. Matthew, and in the parallel place in the Sermon on the Mount<sup>6</sup>, and also in St. Luke's Gospel<sup>7</sup>, we find,—what is very necessary to be observed,—that Our Lord does *not* say, 'Whoso marrieth *the* woman that is put away<sup>8</sup>;' but He says, generally and absolutely, Whoso marrieth *a* woman that has been put away, that is, Whoso marrieth any woman that has been put away by her husband for any cause, committeth adultery.

He had said, in the former part of the verse, "Who-soever putteth away his wife, except it be for fornication, and marrieth another, committeth adultery;" and He now adds, in the latter part, "Whoso marrieth a woman that hath been put away by her husband committeth adultery." The sense is equally clear in

keep the husband who has once fallen to her lot, and that in case of her being cast off from his house, she has no other asylum, even against her will learns to love her husband. . . . But our Lord leaves one cause of divorce, by saying—*except* for the cause of fornication . . . He allows this one, and no other."

<sup>6</sup> Matt. v. 32.

<sup>7</sup> Chap. xvi. 18.

<sup>8</sup> He does *not* say ΤΗΝ ἀπολελυμένην, i e. *the* woman put away by her husband for a particular cause, be it other than fornication, or no; but He says generally, ἀπολελυμένην, *a divorced woman*, a woman who *has been put away by her husband* for any cause just or no. So Luke xvi. 18, ἀπολελυμένην ἀπὸ ἀνδρός.

St. Luke's Gospel, where our Lord says, 'Whoso putteth away His wife and marrieth another committeth adultery;' and "Whosoever marrieth a woman that has been put away<sup>9</sup> by her husband committeth adultery."

3. Besides, the interpretation to which we are now adverting is not only erroneous, but very dangerous in its tendency.

For it amounts to this,—Let a woman be guilty of *any sin, short of adultery*, and then she *cannot* contract a *new* alliance. But, let her proceed a step further,—let her be guilty of a deadly sin,—the sin of adultery, and then she has acquired a liberty to marry whom she will; and any one may marry her. What a perilous doctrine is here! What a wide door does it open to sin and misery! It would give a new stimulus to seduction, and confer a boon on Adultery.

Assuredly this cannot be a doctrine of Christ; and would to heaven it were obliterated from the pages of all Protestant Expositors, and proscribed by the voice of the Nation!

III. What then is the meaning of our Lord's words? "Whoso marrieth a woman that has been put away committeth adultery."

To reply to this question.

The woman, let us observe, is supposed by Him to have been put away *by her husband*.

1. She is either innocent, or not. If she is innocent, then she has been wrongfully put away; he may, it is true, have put her away; and in the times when our Lord was speaking, wives were often put away by their husbands on very slight grounds. But a wife, who has been wrongfully put away, cannot make herself a party to a Divorce. For thus she would plead

<sup>9</sup> ἀπολελυμένην.

guilty to a crime which, by her Saviour's law, is the only cause for Divorce. Her husband, indeed, may treat her as no longer his wife; but she cannot regard him as no longer her husband.

And the Laws of her Country, if it is a Christian Country, will protect her in this vindication of herself. They will defend Womanhood. They will guard Marriage. They will not allow a man, who puts away his wife wrongfully, to marry again. They will not tempt the woman to treat herself as if she were an adulteress, by regarding her as divorced, and by affording her facilities of re-marriage. For Christ Himself has said, "He that marrieth a woman that hath been put away by her husband committeth adultery."

2. But, suppose the other alternative.

Suppose the woman not to be innocent. And suppose she is put away for adultery. Is she not justly put away? Has she not ceased to be a wedded wife? How then, in that case, are we to understand the words of Christ? "He that *marrieth a woman that hath been put away committeth adultery.*"

IV. Here seems, at first sight, to be a paradox; but here is a divine truth; and we need not hesitate to say that the neglect of the divine truth contained in these words of our Lord, has led to much misery and vice. On the other hand, a due regard for it, in Legislation and Administration of Justice, would do much to restore Wedlock to its divine sanctity, and to banish Adultery from the world. May God grant that in any measures which may now be adopted in our own Land, the voice of this Truth may be heard!

1. For what is Adultery? It is a breach of the Marriage-contract. And what is Marriage? Our Lord replies, "*They twain shall be one flesh.*" Therefore union with an Adulteress is union in Adultery.

2. And what let us ask, my brethren, is the *cause* of

Adultery? Where is its spring and root? It is to be found in the treacherous arts of the seducer, and in a guilty passion for him. She who has plighted her troth to another is tempted by Satan and falls. Now, let us remember that by the Law of God, under the Old dispensation, a woman who was false to her husband was *not allowed to marry her seducer*. No, my brethren, she was *not even allowed to live*. The command of Almighty God, written in His Word, is—“*The adulterer and adulteress shall surely be put to death; so shalt thou put away evil from Israel*’.”

Christ did not come to destroy the moral law, but to fulfil it. He came, indeed, to mitigate its rigour, but not to relax its virtue. He came to give new dignity to Marriage; but the Son of God, the Divine Bridegroom of the Church, did not come into the world to give new privileges to Adultery.

3. Suppose now, that the *penalty of death* is removed. And in our own age and country, it *is* not inflicted. Adultery is not visited with death. But is its guilt the less on that account? And, now, suppose that, *if a woman* commits this sin, she thereby acquires permission to marry him who has tempted her to commit it, or to form any other new alliance that she may desire. Suppose (as, alas! is now proposed) that such a marriage as this is sanctioned by the authoritative voice of the Legislature, and by the august forms of a judicial Tribunal, constituted for that purpose; then what a powerful incentive might she have to be false! She may be ill at ease with her husband; they may be ill-matched in age, ill-assorted in temper, in pursuits,

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xx. 10. Deut. xxii. 22. John viii. 5.

In our Lord's age, the power of inflicting capital punishments was taken from the Jews (John xviii. 31). They brought the adulteress to Christ, thinking to ensnare Him thereby. See Hammond on Divorce, p. 600.

in tastes, in dispositions; the husband may be sullen and morose; perhaps the wife may have sown the seeds of suspicion and jealousy in his mind: her home may be cheerless and comfortless. Instead of endeavouring, like Abigail, to bear her burden with lightness of heart,—instead of praying, like Monica<sup>2</sup>, with fervent sighs and tears to God, for the divine influence of the Holy Ghost to soften her husband's heart, and to make her gracious and lovely in his sight, and so winning him to herself and to Christ,—she may be tempted to look elsewhere; estrangement may lead to aversion; she may imagine that she will be more happy—yes, that she will be even more holy—in another alliance. The Laws of her country, and its venerable Judicature, will have seemed to offer it to her as a refuge from the storm,—as a wished-for haven of domestic peace. The Enemy of her soul, in the person of her seducer, will be at her ear to whisper soft hopes into her heart. The end will seem to justify the means. An act of deadly sin—true it is deadly, but it will be only one—will become to her like a work of spiritual emancipation. Adultery will be transformed into an *angel of light*<sup>3</sup>. It will promise to release her from the thralldom of a hated union, and to open to her the door of another home, which fascinates her with fair visions, and enchants her with delusive dreams of happiness and love.

Is there not, therefore, Divine wisdom in the words

<sup>2</sup> The beautiful picture drawn by St. Augustine's hand, of his mother's behaviour to her husband and her mother-in-law (Confessions, ix. 9), may be contemplated by all with benefit and delight; and may be commended to the attention of any who may desire to legalize facilities of divorce. What might Monica have been,—what might her husband have been, what might her mother-in-law, what might St. Augustine have been,—if such facilities had existed among Christians then?

<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 14.

of Christ? "*He that marrieth her that is divorced committeth adultery.*" It is the prospect of these Divorces—it is the hope of these second Marriages—which is the cause of Adultery<sup>4</sup>. Christ, therefore, brands them as adulterous. He arraigns those who contract them as accessories to adultery.

4. Hitherto, my brethren, no Tribunal has existed in England for the dissolution of Holy Matrimony and for the formation of new alliances.

Our Country, like a wise parent, says to us, Take heed how you enter the Marriage State, for when you have once entered it, there is no exit from it, but by death. Therefore "*deliberandum est diu, quod statuendum est semel.*"

And the Church of Christ in this land reminds us that Marriage is to be approached with godly fear. Her language is that of sternness—but it is the sternness of a mother's love. She speaks to us of joy in Marriage, but of joy derived from discharge of duty. "Marriage," she says, "is honourable among all men, and therefore is not by any to be entertained nor taken in hand lightly, but reverently, discreetly, advisedly, soberly, and in the fear of God." It is the most solemn act that you can perform between birth and death. And this, not merely for your own sake, because it will be to you either a great blessing or a great bane—and your own welfare, both in time and eternity, may be here at stake—but also because the

<sup>4</sup> Clemens Alexandrinus (Strom. ii. p. 507, Potter) well says, "he who takes to wife a woman that has been divorced by her husband, is the cause of her adultery, for he gives her occasion to sin, and if he did not receive her she might return to her husband. She who thus sins, is dead while she liveth; but *if she repents*, she is born again to life by repentance. For the Holy Spirit saith, 'I will not the death of a sinner, but that he should be converted and live,' Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

welfare, temporal and eternal, of other immortal beings is here involved—that of your future wife, to be made one with yourself, that of your children, and children's children. It is therefore no light thing to undertake the responsibilities of a husband and a father. And if you enter upon them rashly, you are guilty of cruelty toward man and of irreverence toward God. Hence the Church of Christ in her Ritual, and our Country in her Laws—though now, alas! with a faltering voice—speaks to us in the words of solemn warning.

And yet Marriages are often contracted unadvisedly; and we see the wretched consequences of such recklessness. But yet, thanks be to God, some Marriages which appeared to be most improvident in their beginning, may, and often do, become happy in their continuance and in their end, *under the influence of the indissolubility of Marriage*. It has been well said<sup>5</sup> that “when two persons understand that they must live together”—that they are inseparably united for better or for worse—“they learn to soften by mutual accommodation the yoke which they know they cannot shake off; they become *good* husbands and *good* wives from the necessity of remaining husbands and wives. For Necessity is a powerful Master in teaching the duties it imposes.”

And may we not add, my brethren, that some of the most beautiful examples of human patience, tenderness, and love, which the angels, who are in heaven, now behold in this lower world of ours, are seen in the mutual forbearance and self-sacrifice of husbands and wives? They bear one another's burdens, and help one another's infirmities. They cherish one another in sorrow, they comfort one another in sickness, and soothe one another in trouble, and refresh one

<sup>5</sup> By Lord Stowell, in the case of *Evans v. Evans*.



another in weariness, and cheer one another onward on the way to heaven.

Here is a holy discipline of our tempers ; here is an exercise of our virtues ; and here is an increase of our graces, and an earnest of our glory. Here, it may be, is present suffering ; but here also is a bright hope of future joy. These domestic trials on earth are the leaves and flowers of which the heavenly crown is woven.

Yet, after all, assuredly, there are unhappy marriages, for which no such remedies are found.

True. But is the welfare of a Community to be sacrificed, because some persons in it suffer from their own rashness, and because they are not willing to *apply* the remedies which the Gospel of Christ affords to alleviate the unhappiness consequent on their own imprudence ? Is the Law of God to be broken, and His Wrath to be incurred by a Nation, because some individuals in it may have despised His counsel, and may desire to abrogate His statutes ?

No ; my brethren, this is not the way to promote the happiness of a Community, nor of any individuals in it.

For, suppose that opportunities should be afforded for Divorce, and for the formation of new matrimonial alliances by the parties separated from each other,—suppose that a new Judicial Tribunal (as now proposed) should be constituted for this purpose, and that Divorce were made easy ; suppose that Divorce and Re-marriage were (as is designed) to be made purchaseable by Adultery, then, is it not to be feared that many more individuals, than is now the case, would be made miserable by reckless marriages ? The knot being easy to be untied, less care would be taken in tying it. And ill-advised marriages, having been once contracted, would not *then* have those healing means of recovery which are now supplied by the indissolubility of Marriage, and by God's grace acting with it ; they

would become daily more irksome and intolerable ; and the sin of Adultery, which brings down God's judgments on Families and Nations, would become common and familiar ; temptations to it would even be offered to wives<sup>6</sup> by their own husbands, in order that the one might be liberated from the other, and that both might be free to form a new alliance ; Adultery would be even welcomed by many as a release from a hard bondage, and be almost consecrated as a Virtue.

From such calamities as these may God deliver us !

Therefore, my beloved brethren, by the mercies of Christ Who redeemed you, and for the love of the souls whom He hath redeemed, be not persuaded to encourage facilities for Divorce. In the eye of our Lord and Saviour such facilities as these are facilities for Adultery. They are facilities for shame and misery in Time and Eternity. Let us earnestly supplicate our Rulers—the appointed Guardians under God of our public happiness and virtue—to preserve our fellow-countrywomen, especially our poorer fellow-countrywomen, from the dangerous temptations which such facilities would afford. Let us implore them rather, to renounce the invidious privilege, and abolish the evil example, of granting Divorces to the Rich<sup>7</sup>. Disturb not the peace of Families, sully not the honour, offend not the modesty of English matrons, by offering them temptations to disgrace. Death is far preferable to such ignominy as that. In the case supposed,—the commission of the sin of unfaithfulness,—the penitential sorrow of a contrite heart is the only remedy. *That*, we know, may prevail through the merits of Christ. She who has been tempted to fall may find pardon and peace if she comes to Him, and bathes His

<sup>6</sup> See the observations of S. Augustine, and also the testimony of Lord Eldon, *above*, p. 217, note 1.

<sup>7</sup> See *above*, p. 203, 4.

feet with her tears, and wipes them with her hair. A reconciliation may take place; the Vale of Achor may become a *Door of Hope*, and *there is joy in heaven over a sinner that repenteth* <sup>8</sup>.

But all other paths lead to the gate of death. And it is not mercy—no it is not mercy,—though it assume that sacred name,—it is rather heartless cruelty—to beguile an unhappy woman from the only true way of recovery and happiness,—the way of Repentance;—and to decoy her into a false way, the way of Re-marriage, and so to tempt her to destruction.

We urge this plea, therefore, even on behalf of the guilty. We would urge a similar plea in behalf of innocent children, the offspring of those who may be tempted to sin by facilities of divorce and re-marriage, and who may thus reduce those children to a worse state than that of orphans. *For the glory of a man is from the honour of his father, and a mother in dishonour is a reproach to the children* <sup>9</sup>.

We here also make a solemn appeal in behalf of our Spiritual Mother, the Church. Shall she be required to solemnize such second marriages as these? Shall the Spouse of Christ be invited to pronounce a blessing on marriages which her Lord condemns as adulteries? Heaven forbid! If she dared to do so, she would be rejected by Him as an adulteress <sup>10</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> Hos. ii. 15. Luke x. 7. 10.

<sup>9</sup> Ecclus. iii. 11.

<sup>10</sup> The expressions of remorse and anguish in Laud's penitential prayer, in reference to Lord Mountjoy's marriage, are more than enough to deter any Clergyman from solemnizing such a marriage as that. See Heylin's Laud, p. 57, 58, on Dec. 26, 1605.

As the name of Bp. Cosin has sometimes been made use of, as if he were not unfavourable to re-marriages, it may be as well to state what his opinion was. He maintained—

- (1.) That by the Law of Christ a man might put away his wife for adultery, and marry again \*.
- (2.)

\* This was Lord Rosse's case (A. D. 1669), and the drift of Cosin's argument is to shew this. Of eighteen Bishops in the house, only two voted for the

But I forbear. Enough has been said to shew the Divine Wisdom of the words, "*He that marrieth a woman that hath been put away committeth adultery.*" And must we not therefore say in the words of one of old, "Can a *human law allow what a Divine Law forbids?* He who is the Truth hath said, 'Whosoever marrieth her that is put away committeth adultery.' Who will venture to contradict this Divine Legislator<sup>1</sup>?"

V. In the two parts of the present Discourse we have been endeavouring to declare the Doctrine of Christ in the Gospel concerning Marriage and Divorce.

To sum up what has been said. We have seen—

1. That Marriage was instituted by God, and that according to His will and design, the Marriage-bond is indissoluble, *What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.*

2. We find that by the Mosaic Law Adultery was punished with death<sup>2</sup>.

Our Lord came not to destroy the Moral Law but to fulfil it. And in all moral questions, especially

(2.) That "this freedom of marrying again is not allowed to the adulteress." See his argument on the Dissolution of Marriage. *Parl. History*, iv. p. 447. *State Trials*, xiii. 1283, 1332. *Works*, vol. iv. p. 489, 450, ed. Oxf. 1851.

<sup>1</sup> *S. Greg. Lib. ii. Ep. 39.*

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 229. And even if a person defiled a woman who had only been betrothed to another man, that person, and the *woman* also (under certain circumstances), were to be put to death. *Deut. xxii. 22—24.*

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Divorce, viz. Cosin and Wilkins (others add Reynolds), although the King was present at the debates, and "drove on the bill in favour of the Divorce." What would those eighteen Bishops have said, what would the three have said, to the proposal now before us?

It is an alarming sign of the present times, that such a measure as this should have advanced so far as it has, with such apparent ease.

with regard to Marriage, the Gospel, though less severe in its present punishments than the Law, is more stringent in its obligations.

We may not therefore suppose, that, although a Christian Code may not visit Adultery with death, it may give those who may be guilty of that sin privileges which were not granted them under the Law—particularly the privilege of marrying again.

3. It being God's primary and general intention that Marriage should be indissoluble, we find that Christ has uttered a general prohibition against Divorce; that He forbids a man to put away his wife and marry another, and affirms that he who does so commits adultery, save only in one case, that is, except it be for fornication.

4. Although He does not forbid a second marriage to the man in this particular case, He does not advise it, but rather dissuades it, such marriage being a bar to reconciliation, and almost closing the door to endeavours for a reparation of the breach of God's holy ordinance, and for recovery from deadly sin, which excludes from the kingdom of heaven.

5. In this solemn manner Christ has exemplified His general desire that all men should abstain from sin, and should *perfect holiness in His fear*; for *without holiness no man shall see the Lord*<sup>3</sup>. He therefore takes away *occasions* of sin. And next, in His infinite tenderness and love, He desires that all who have sinned should *repent*; that they should escape the anguish of Hell, and attain the joys of Heaven; and therefore He endeavours to keep the door of Repentance open to them, and engages men to shew mercy and to forgive injuries, and so obtain mercy for themselves at the Great Day; and, if it be possible to

<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. vii. 1. Heb. xii. 14.

reclaim the erring, and to recover and restore a soul once most dear, and plighted by the most sacred vows of love <sup>4</sup>.

6. For similar reasons, namely, to cut off occasions of sin, and to take away all temptation to conjugal infidelity,—He declares that “He who marrieth a woman that has been put away by her husband is guilty of adultery.” If she is put away wrongfully—that is, without having been guilty of the sin of conjugal unfaithfulness—then she must seek to be restored to her husband; which would be impossible, if she is married to another. But if she is put away for that sin, then He who allies himself with her, be he her seducer, or be he another person, is an accomplice in her sin. For it is the prospect of these second alliances which is the main cause of adultery. Remove the cause, and the sin will not be committed. And even if it should, yet then the remedy for the sin is to be sought in Repentance, and not in shutting the door to Repentance by a new alliance, rendering Reconciliation almost impossible <sup>5</sup>. “He therefore that marrieth her that is put away committeth adultery.” Let him take heed. For no adulterer shall enter the kingdom of God, but shall have his portion in the lake of fire <sup>6</sup>.

VI. Such is the meaning of our Lord’s precepts concerning Marriage and Divorce.

Is this interpretation of them authorized by the

<sup>4</sup> See Grotius on Matt. v. 32.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Grotius ad S. Matt. v. 31, who well says, “in illum recidit crimen adulterii, qui novo matrimonio spem restituendæ concordiæ abruptit.” And “Intelligendum hoc de illis qui dimissas excipiebant, . . . aut alienis uxoribus inhiantes per *divortia* sibi *nuptiis* sternebant viam.”

<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 9. Rev. xxi. 8.

teaching of the primitive Church? This is an important question, and let us endeavour to answer it.

I. It was a doctrine generally received in ancient Christendom, that a man might separate himself—and by some it was held that he ought to separate himself—from his wife for conjugal infidelity, but that he ought *not to contract a second alliance*<sup>7</sup>. In these cases, therefore, the bond of Matrimony was not broken.

Some Fathers, and particular Councils of the Church, held that such a second alliance was unlawful<sup>8</sup>. Others, who did not deny it to be lawful<sup>9</sup>, affirmed that it was

<sup>7</sup> Concil. Eliber. can. 65. A.D. 305. Concil. Neocæsar. can. 8. A.D. 314. These apply to the wives of the Clergy.

<sup>8</sup> In *Hermas Pastor*. Lib. ii. Mand. iv., it is declared that a husband, being cognizant of his wife's adultery, ought to put her away, if she does not repent; but that, if he marries another, he is guilty of adultery. S. Jerome, in *Matt. xix.*, says, *Sic priorem dimittere jubetur uxorem (for fornication) ut secundam, primam vivente, non habeat. Necnon quia poterat evenire ut juxta eandem legem uxor quoque marito daret repudium, eadem cautela præcipitur ne secundum accipiat virum; et quia meretrix, et quæ semel fuerat adultera, opprobrium non timet, secundo præcipitur viro, quod si talem duxerit, sub adulterii sit crimine.* And S. Jerome, *Epist. xxx.* (pro libris suis adv. Jovinian.), *Sententia Domini uxorem exceptam causam fornicationis non repudiandam et repudiatam alteri non nubere, aut certè viro suo debere reconciliari,—which could not be, if he married again.* S. Aug. de *Conjug. Adult. i. 9*, *Eum, qui præter causam fornicationis uxorem dimiserit, et aliam duxerit, mœchum pronuntiamus; nec ideo tamen eum, qui propter causam fornicationis dimiserit, et alteram duxerit, ab hujus peccati labe defendimus.* S. Aug. de *Conj. Adult. i. 12, ii. 16*, *adulterium sine dubio committitur, si conjugem adulteram vivente altera ducitur.* He had spoken more doubtfully in his *De Fide et Operibus*, c. 35, tom. vi. p. 319.

<sup>9</sup> For example, *Epiphan. Hæret. lix. p. 497*, ed. Petav. οὐκ αἰτιᾶται ὁ θεῖος λόγος, οὐδὲ ἀπὸ τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ τῆς ζωῆς ἀποκρῦπτει, ἀλλὰ διαβαστάζει διὰ τὸ ἀσθενές. And the practice had become common in the Greek Church in the sixteenth century. See *Sarpi, Storia di Concilio di Trento ad A. D. 1563*, p. 773, I Greci

not expedient<sup>1</sup>. This, you may recollect, was the conclusion to which we were brought in the former part of our Discourse<sup>2</sup>.

II. With regard to the second point, it was universally affirmed by the Ancient Church, that a woman divorced for adultery was incapable of contracting a *second alliance* during her husband's life, and that a *person who married her* was an accomplice in adultery<sup>3</sup>; and it was affirmed by some<sup>4</sup> that she was incapable

da antichissimo tempo costumano di ripudiar la moglie fornicaria e pigliarne un' altra.

<sup>1</sup> Concil. Arelat. i. c. 10 (A. D. 314). *Consilium detur ne viventibus uxoribus suis, licet adulteris, alias accipiant. Cp. Concil. Eliber. c. 9. Fœmina fidelis quæ adulterum maritum reliquerit fidelem, et alterum ducit, prohibeatur, ne ducat; si duxerit, non prius accipiat communionem, nisi quem reliquerit, de sæculo exierit.*

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Hammond (on Divorce, thus speaks, i. p. 596). "It may be probably concluded that, in the one case of divorce for fornication, the marriage of the innocent party shall not be adulterous; and that, though this be granted, yet the words of Mark and Luke, and especially the words of St. Paul (1 Cor. vii. 39), do give such prejudices against marriages after divorce indefinitely, that the ancient Canons of the Church of God and the Constitutions of our English Reformation have thought fit not to permit such liberty in any kind."

<sup>3</sup> Lactant. Institut. vi. 23. *Adulterum esse qui à marito dimissam duxerit, et eum qui præter crimen adulteri uxorem dimiserit, ut alterum ducat. S. Aug. De Conj. Adult. i. 9. Quicumque mulierem à marito præter causam fornicationis dimissam duxerit, mœchatur; nec tamen illum, qui propter causam fornicationis dimissam duxerit, ab hoc crimine absolvimus. Ibid. Neque quisquam ita est absurdus, ut mœchum neget esse qui duxerit eam, quam maritus, propter causam fornicationis, abjecit. (In S. Aug. Opera, t. vi. p. 664, ed. Bened. Paris, 1837. And yet it is proposed that England should legalize this practice.)*

<sup>4</sup> Concil. Tribur. c. 40. *Tale connubium anathematizamus et Christianis omnibus obseramus. Non licet ergo nec Christianæ religioni oportet ut ullus eâ utatur in matrimonio cum quâ prius pollutus erat adulterio.*



of marrying the partner of her crime, even after her husband's death.

The Church of Rome has carried these doctrines to an extreme in theory, while she has almost subverted them in practice. At the Council of Trent<sup>5</sup> she anathematized those who affirm that she is in error, when she says that the bond of marriage cannot be dissolved for adultery, and that the innocent party cannot contract a second Marriage. And yet, in her acts, she has treated the Marriage-bond as Samson did the green withs with which he was bound<sup>6</sup>. She has violated it by dispensations, and by devising new nullities of consanguinity and spiritual affinity<sup>7</sup>, or by decoying one of the married parties to the solitude of a cloister. She appears to have locked the door, in order that she might keep the key and open the door at pleasure for her own gain<sup>8</sup>.

No wonder that, when the Reformation appeared in the world, a disposition was shewn to run in the opposite direction. Under the dominion of Rome men had seen rigid Laws and licentious Practice. It was easier to relax the laws than restrain the practice<sup>9</sup>. It was found that some of her laws were anti-scriptural, and others were supposed to be so. By an excess of reaction, incident to human affairs, these and other causes produced evil consequences, which are still felt in the domestic and social life of many Nations of Europe. Our own Country was in peril. But, happily,

<sup>5</sup> Sess. xxiv. Can. vii.

<sup>6</sup> Judges xvi. 7.

<sup>7</sup> Con. Trid. Sess. xxiv. can. 7.

<sup>8</sup> Amesius contra Bellarmin, iii. 274.

<sup>9</sup> Probably no event in the History of the Reformation brought more discredit upon it than the permission given by Luther, Bucer, and Melanchtl.on to Philip, Landgrave of Hesse, to marry a second wife during the life of the former. See the use made of it by Bossuet, *Hist. des Variations*, liv. vi. at end.

England was preserved by a merciful Providence from the calamities which afflict them.

The Scriptural and truly Catholic doctrine concerning Marriage was then embodied in the "Form for the Solemnization of Matrimony," in our Book of Common Prayer. Listen to its sacred words,

"O God, who by Thy mighty power hast made all things of nothing; Who also (after other things set in order) didst appoint, that out of Man (created after Thine own image and similitude) Woman should take her beginning; and, knitting them *together*, didst teach that it should never be lawful to put *asunder* those whom Thou by Matrimony hadst made one: O God, Who hast consecrated the state of Matrimony to such an excellent mystery, that in it is signified and represented the spiritual Marriage and unity betwixt Christ and His Church; Look mercifully upon these thy servants, that both this man may love his wife according to thy Word (as Christ did love His spouse the Church, Who gave Himself for it, loving and cherishing it even as His own flesh), and also that this woman may be loving and amiable, faithful and obedient to her husband; and in all quietness, sobriety, and peace, be a follower of holy and godly matrons. O Lord, bless them both, and grant them to inherit thy everlasting kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Would to heaven, my brethren, that these blessed words were oftener heard in full Churches by large congregations! Would that their divine truths were deeply imprinted on the Nation's mind, and that the prayers and hymns of that holy office were uttered with the heavenly concert of harmonious hearts! This would be a sacred melody in which Angels might love to join. England has often been called the land of Homes. Heaven forbid that she should ever forfeit that honour-

able and holy name! In contemplating the future, hopes arise in the heart, not unmingled with saddening fears. If this blessing is to be preserved to us, and to our children's children, it can only be by a firm resolve, on your part, and on that of the English Nation, with the aid of Almighty God, to guard Marriage as the pure well-spring of our public peace and domestic joy.

It can only be by careful attention, on your part, to the divine precepts and warnings of Him Who instituted Marriage in Paradise, and joined our Nature to the Divine, and consecrated Wedlock to a holy Mystery, and made it to be a similitude of His own union with the Church, and Who is our everlasting Judge and King, as well as our most mighty Saviour and merciful Redeemer; and Who will punish all violations of Marriage as acts of sacrilege against Himself, and will reward the pure in heart with the beatific Vision of God.



## SERMON XLI.

RESTORATION OF HOLY MATRIMONY.

EPH. v. 32.

*“ This is a great Mystery ; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church<sup>1</sup>. ”*

DURING some centuries we have enjoyed many privileges, social and domestic, through the loving-kindness of Him who hath given us *all things that pertain to life and godliness<sup>2</sup>*; and these blessings have been vouchsafed to us in order that we may *perfect holiness in the fear of God<sup>3</sup>*; *For this is the will of God, even our sanctification<sup>4</sup>*.

I. But many circumstances seem to prove that we are in danger of forfeiting these benefits, and of being reduced to a lower degree in the scale of Christian civilization.

Marriage is the fountain of household charities and of domestic joys, and the origin of domestic duties. If this source is disturbed, the streams will be no longer pure. Conjugal love, parental affection, filial obedience, will, as it were, trickle feebly, and almost stagnate and be dried up. The opposite sins will abound; the *overflowings of ungodliness will make us*

<sup>1</sup> Preached at Westminster Abbey, Sunday afternoon, Aug. 13.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Pet. i. 3.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. vii. 1.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 3.

*afraid*<sup>5</sup>; the barriers of law will be broken down, and the peace of Society will be overwhelmed as with a flood.

Let us not imagine that we can be saved from these calamities by the exercise of the intellect alone. The Heathen Nations of antiquity were rich in mental endowments. They were eminent in Arts and Sciences, in Literature and Commerce, as well as in Arms. But you remember what the Holy Spirit says concerning them in the zenith of their wealth, and power, and intellectual glory. *Professing themselves wise they became fools*; and *God gave them over to a reprobate mind—being filled with all unrighteousness and fornication; . . . disobedient to parents, without natural affection*<sup>6</sup>. You will recollect also that the Holy Spirit has prophesied that the same features of social depravity will characterize the latter days; some Christian Nations will sink into the social demoralization in which other Nations were at the coming of Christ. And it is remarkable that the Holy Spirit, in foreshadowing that state, uses almost the same words as those with which He had described the social condition of the heathen. *This know also, He says*<sup>7</sup>, *that in the last days perilous times shall come, for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection. . . . From such turn away.*

II. We may, therefore, expect to see that, notwithstanding the achievements of human Intelligence,—and perhaps, in some degree, through pride, and self-confidence, and forgetfulness of God, which those achievements are too apt to engender—the worst vices of heathenism will be repeated in Christian times. And we may be assured that they will entail more

<sup>5</sup> Ps. xviii. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Rom. i. 22—31.

<sup>7</sup> 2 Tim. iii. 1—5.

than all the shame and misery which they inflicted on Heathen Nations. For they will be sins against the Law of Scripture as well as against the Law of Reason and of Conscience; they will be sins committed, not in the dim twilight of Heathenism, but in the noon-day splendours of the Gospel. And they will be punished accordingly.

It may, therefore, well become us to consider—whether we ourselves are not concerned here?

Behold the dark picture traced by the finger of God. *Being filled with unrighteousness, fornication, disobedient to parents, without natural affection. . . .* May we not perceive some resemblance to our own condition? Let us pause and consider.

The Marriage Covenant is the basis of human society. No sooner was man created than God said, *It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make an help meet for him*<sup>8</sup>. And the work of Redemption was inaugurated with Marriage. Christ espoused our Nature, and betrothed to Himself a Bride. *This is a great Mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.*

III. It is on this foundation of Marriage, as instituted by God, and reconsecrated by Christ, that social happiness is based. If it be shaken, all the relations of civilized life will be disturbed, and the fabric of society will totter and fall. And a Nation, where this is the case, may expect to be visited with severe judgments for its violation of God's Law and desecration of His Ordinance.

1. For this reason your attention has been already invited<sup>9</sup> to an alarming symptom of our social condition. It is affirmed by many that we need facilities of Divorce; that we require the constitution of a new

<sup>8</sup> Gen. ii. 18.

<sup>9</sup> Above, No. XL.

Tribunal for the purpose of dissolving the Marriage-bond, and of giving even to the guilty party permission to marry again. If this is our remedy, how great must be the disease.

Here is one sign of our social peril. Heaven grant it may not prove an omen of social dissolution.

2. Let us advert to another symptom of our condition.

And here we may recite the language of some who do not wish well to our Sion<sup>1</sup>, and have charged us with acts that would bring disgrace on humanity.

The accusation is as follows:—

“You read in Scripture with horror the records of the sin of parents who sacrificed their children to Moloch. How should you shudder, therefore, when you are informed that a like sin is perpetrated among you! And yet is it not true—and has not the truth been proclaimed by verdicts of your juries, and by evidence rehearsed in the ears of your Legislature, and promulgated by the voice of your public press throughout Europe and the World, that in the middle of the nineteenth century, in England,—Protestant England,—Parents are known to register their children on the rolls of a Burial Society, under the guise of securing them the rites of Christian interment in case of death, and then to abandon those children to the lingering torture of gradual starvation, in order that they may receive for themselves a premium on their decease?”

“Are these the fruits of your vaunted Intelligence? These the results of your Education, these the benefits of your Reformation, and of the free circulation of Scripture?”

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxxix. 5.



Such, my brethren, is the charge now brought against us by some who would use our national miseries as arguments against the Truth<sup>2</sup>.

We have reason to believe that this accusation is exaggerated<sup>3</sup>, and we would gladly be assured that it is wholly without foundation. But it may have its uses, and therefore we recite it here. It may shew us what dreadful calamities we may apprehend, if the source of society is not purified. It may serve to awaken us from our slumber, and stir up our flagging energy. It may remind us that some are eagerly on the watch to exult over the moral degradation of England, and even to charge it on Scripture. Therefore it may well stimulate us, as citizens and Christians, to labour more earnestly in the cause of Religious Restoration.

“*This know also (says the Apostle), that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, . . . without natural affection. . . .*” The circumstances of our country, and the voice of the Holy Spirit speaking by the Apostle, call us to the work of Restoration. It is time that the wounds of the community were probed to the quick, in order that, if it be God’s will, a remedy may be provided for the disease.

3. Need we advert to the prevalence of other sins which may well fill us with alarm? Doubtless there is a strong inducement to draw a veil over them. By some they are deemed inveterate, and almost in-

<sup>2</sup> See particularly the papers in the “Univers Catholique” for Feb. 6, 1854, Aug. 5 and Aug. 9, 1854, where the verdicts of English Juries, and the statements and comments of the English Press on this subject, are collected and used for the purposes described above.

<sup>3</sup> See the Report of the Select Committee on Friendly Societies, July 26, 1854.

curable. But if we despair of a remedy, the words of God will sound in our ears, *Will ye come and stand before Me in this house, and say, We are delivered to do these abominations*<sup>4</sup>? Is there any new way to heaven? Is it no longer true that *without holiness no man shall see the Lord*, that into that pure abode nothing shall enter that defileth<sup>5</sup>? and that *the unclean shall have their part in the lake of fire*<sup>6</sup>? Can God's Law be repealed by man's sin? Can we quench the lake of Fire by concealing it from our view?

Denunciations against sins are fearful; but Silence with regard to them is more fearful still. If we are silent as to the sins in question, why would it be so? Not because they are rare, not because they are trivial, but because they are common, because they are so powerful, that they seem to triumph over our Laws, and to trample the Gospel under their feet. Therefore such silence is terrible. It is like the silence of the Physician, the silence of despair, which the Poet describes as the worst symptom of the Plague,—

“Mussat tacito Medicina timore<sup>7</sup>.”

But it may be said—if we are not silent, we may perhaps offend the ear, and familiarize the mind with sin. But what was the practice of our Divine Master, our perfect Exemplar in preaching and living? Doubtless there were chaste matrons and modest maidens hanging on the lips of Him *Who spake as never man spake*<sup>8</sup>, when He preached the Sermon on the Mount. And you remember how plainly Christ speaks on the sinfulness of impure desires, how clearly He proclaims His Divine Law concerning Marriage, and against Adultery and Divorce.

<sup>4</sup> Jer. vii. 10.

<sup>5</sup> Rev. xxii. 27.

<sup>6</sup> Rev. xxi. 8.

<sup>7</sup> Lucret. vi. 1177.

<sup>8</sup> John vii. 46.

And what was the custom of His Apostles? Doubtless there were many holy women present in the Church at Corinth when St. Paul's Epistles were read (as the Apostle commanded they should be), and in which he denounces with holy indignation an incestuous alliance, and rebukes those particular sins for which that City was notorious.

But why do we speak of Apostles? Those Epistles were dictated by the Holy Ghost, the Author of Purity. He ordered that they should be read in public congregations, in the ear of Christendom, to the end of time. He teaches us there what Marriage is—a great Mystery. He shews us that it is the pure well-spring of domestic joy and public peace. He displays the deadliness of those sins which directly or indirectly do injury and dishonour to Marriage; He thus deters us from sin, and exhorts us to repent. He reminds us that in Baptism He consecrated our bodies to be Temples of Himself<sup>9</sup>. He warns us that these bodies will be raised hereafter, either to shame or glory, accordingly as we have used them here<sup>1</sup>; and exhorts us to present *our bodies a living sacrifice to God*<sup>2</sup>. He teaches and enables us by His grace to *keep ourselves unspotted from the world*<sup>3</sup>, and to become candidates for everlasting glory, and to be made *meet for the inheritance of the Saints in light*<sup>4</sup>. He charges the Ministers of the Gospel to teach all men *as strangers and pilgrims to abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul*<sup>5</sup>; *to teach young men to be sober minded*<sup>6</sup>, *to flee youthful lusts*<sup>7</sup>; *to teach young women to be discreet, chaste, and good*<sup>8</sup>; *to adorn*

<sup>9</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 16; vi. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. xii. 1.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 11.

<sup>4</sup> James i. 27.

<sup>5</sup> Titus ii. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Titus ii. 5.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. v. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Col. i. 12.

<sup>7</sup> 2 Tim. ii. 22.

*themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety<sup>9</sup>; to have the head covered in the house of God<sup>1</sup>; to adorn themselves with the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price<sup>2</sup>.*

Such being the example of Christ, and of His Apostles, and such the teaching of the Holy Ghost, it becomes us to speak with all boldness on the necessity of holiness, and on the shamefulness of those sins which are contrary thereto, and are too prevalent among us<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> 1 Tim. ii. 9.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 5.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. iii. 4.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, the Evidence in Mr. Fletcher's Report in vol. ii. p. 326, 327, of the Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education for 1848-50; and see a Tract by Rev. J. Chandler, Vicar of Witley, Surrey.

In order to supply, what would have been added to the present Discourse, if time had allowed, the Author may perhaps be permitted to insert some paragraphs from another Sermon on this subject.

"1. In our rural Parishes, children are removed from School at an early age, and are prematurely exposed to the temptations of a dangerous liberty. They are brought again, it may be, under superintendence and instruction of their Pastors at the time of Confirmation; and, in many cases, they derive great benefits from the holy influences of that solemn season. But too many, it is to be feared, among them give then but a superficial glance at their own souls, and at God's Law, and pass on like him *who beholdeth his natural face in a glass, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was* (James i. 23). Young women, having passed this period, and sometimes even before it, go out to work in the fields, or into household service. Then they are often in peril. Happy their lot, if the vigilant eye of a pious and loving parent is still upon them, or if they are placed under the roof of a wise and good Master, who does not say in his heart with Cain, *Am I my brother's Keeper* (Gen. iv. 9), but deems with Abraham and with Joshua, that the salvation of the souls of *those within his gates* (Exod. xx. 10) concerns him as well as the salvation of his own soul.

"But how often, have we cause to deplore, that Indifference

IV. In doing this, we must endeavour to discover the *root of the evil*, and to apply those remedies which God has prescribed for it.

wears the guise of Toleration, and Selfishness claims the praise of Liberality! How often is it found that Masters, and even Parents, will take little trouble for the spiritual welfare of their servants and children, so that, as far as their domestic guardians are concerned, those young persons have cause to say—*no one cared for my soul* (Ps. cxlii. 5).

“And what follows ?

“2. The young woman, who has forfeited her modesty, and with it has lost that dowry of the soul which gave her favour in the sight of men, and endeared her to Angels and to Christ, is either afterwards married to her Tempter, Betrayer and Enemy—who, in bitter mockery, calls himself her Lover—or she is not.

“If she is not, she remains, it may be, a burden to her parents and her friends. If she dies in childbed, how dreary is her end! If she gives birth to a child,—that event, which Christ has described as one that ought to bring unspeakable comfort (John xvi. 21), is to her an aggravation of her sorrow and her shame. She is not a *joyful* mother of children (Ps. cxiii. 9). She cannot adopt the divine words, *Lo, children and the fruit of the womb are an heritage and gift that cometh of the Lord* (Ps. cxxvii. 4). These blessings *might* have been hers. But she has lost them. And now she is almost a widow without having been a wife, and her offspring is almost an orphan from its birth; and how can it *perform the first commandment with promise* (Eph. vi. 2)? Perhaps it does not know, who its father is. And if it does, how can it honour a father who has dishonoured and deserted its mother; how can it honour the mother who has dishonoured herself, and brought it into the world with a stigma on its name? . . . How miserable therefore is the condition of mother and child! And how dark is the prospect before them! Is it not to be feared that the one may never revive to a sense of shame,—that she may add sin to sin, and that the child may never be led into the paths of piety and peace?

“3. But suppose a marriage takes place between the two parties. This alternative is doubtless the less evil of the two\*: and under

\* The “*Reformatio Legum*” thus speaks on this subject: *de Matrimonio*, cap. 3, *Nec tamen illorum fœda libido gravi pœna carere debet qui simplicitatem puellarum circumveniunt, et illarum castitatem promissis et blanditiis obsident donec turpissimè corporibus earum tandem illudant. Nam cum pudicitiae thesaurum illis detrahunt, omnibus reliquis opibus et copiis pretiosiore, in graviore illos æquum est pœnas incidere quàm fures quorum in rebus externis*

And here we may revert to the Apostolic representation of heathen cities, and examine the *cause* of

the circumstances, it is prescribed by the law of God (Exod. xxii. 16. Deut. xxii. 28). But unhappily it is too often believed to make amends for the sin. And this false notion gives occasion to the sin itself. Thus Marriage is made an instrument of the Evil One. That divine ordinance is perverted into a snare for the soul. And the promise of marriage, which leads to the sin, is often only a promise, and is not fulfilled, or, if it is kept, yet the marriage to which it leads cannot be called Holy Matrimony. How unlike is it to that honourable estate instituted by God in the time of man's innocency! Who can regard it as a figure of the mystical union and marriage between Christ and His Church? Christ loves His Spouse as Himself. Christ has sanctified her, that He may present her to *Himself without spot or wrinkle* (Eph. v. 26, 27).

“But, here, the man has brought disgrace on his wife. And how is the sweet music of the Church put out of tune by such a marriage as this. *O well is thee, and happy shalt thou be; Thy wife as the fruitful vine upon the walls of thine house. Thy children like the olive branches round about thy table. Lo, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord* (Ps. cxxviii. 2—4). These divine melodies grate like harsh sounds upon the ear at such a Marriage as this. And how can the Priest say with the voice of faith and hope and joy, suited to a nuptial celebration, *O Lord, save thy servant and thy handmaid*; and how can the people respond, *Who put their trust in Thee*? How can he pray with confidence that a wife thus wedded may be a *follower of holy and godly matrons*, and that those two persons may see their children christianly and virtuously brought up? How can it be hoped that Christ will be present with a blessing at such a wedding as this? How can it be expected that the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Purity and Love, will brood over it with His *silver wings and feathers like gold*?

“4. Let us trace such a marriage as this in its course.

“It is not contracted by the man with pure religious affection, as marriage ought to be, but often with feelings of distaste and repugnance. *Heavenly love never fades*; it grows with time, and enjoys a perpetual youth. But earthly passion is soon blighted, withered, and dies. Often when the guilty desire is gratified, it is changed by a righteous retribution into loathing and antipathy. And then the words of Holy Scripture concerning Amnon and

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peccat improbitas. Ecclesiâ igitur illos *excommunicationis telo præcipimus exturbari, nec ullum ad eas reditum illis esse, nisi velint illas uxores ducere.*”

the vices he enumerates, and the remedy devised for them. They were *filled with all unrighteousness and*

Tamar are verified †, *He hated her exceedingly, so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love wherewith he had loved her* (2 Sam. xiii. 15). Therefore the man does not enter wedlock as a holy and honourable estate, typifying Christ's Union with His Church. The sacred cord is wanting to unite heart with heart. God's hand does not join theirs together. Hence after marriage arise coldness, remorse, bitterness, jealousy, mutual recrimination, estrangement, perhaps desertion. God's good Spirit has been withdrawn. The Evil Spirit has entered the house. The affections, it may be, roam elsewhere. . . . And what will betide the offspring of such an Alliance as this? The Virtue of Parents is the best wealth of their offspring; but a mother *in dishonour is a reproach to the children* (Ecclus. iii. 11). Will they be brought up *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord* (Eph. vi. 4)? Will they be led by the Parents to God's house, and nurtured in His Word, and brought to kneel side by side with their Parents at His table? Will Parents teach virtues which they have not practised? If they have not respected themselves, and each other, will their Children honour them? Will God put the spirit of docility and dutiful submission into their hearts? Do not the sins of Parents reproduce themselves in their offspring, and so propagate themselves, often with increasing intensity, from generation to generation, and produce a harvest of woe? And thus our Village Homes, which ought to be the abodes of Purity and Peace, become too often the abodes of sorrow and of shame, and the notions of right and wrong are confounded, and deadly sins are regarded as venial, because they are common, and '*corrumpere et corrumpi sæculum vocatur ‡*' and society is polluted, and God's wrath is kindled against us, and many souls are lost, and the prospect of the future is dark, and a voice sounds in the ears of the Christian Pastor, *Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock* (Jer. xiii. 20)?"

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† "Sæpe ex turpi consuetudine horrenda odia nascuntur. Semiramis plerosque amasios suos crudeliter interfecit. Medea amasium suum ita odit ut in ejus vindictam filios communes jugulârit. Idem de amore post cupiditatem expletam in odium mutato Honorii in Placidiam narrat Olympiodorus." Grot. et al. in 2 Sam. xiii. 15.

‡ Tacit. German. c. 15, a description which might put some of our own villages to shame. "Severa illic matrimonia; intersunt parentes et propinqui. Septa pudicitia agunt, nullis spectaculorum illecebris, nullis conviviorum irritationibus corruptæ. Publicatæ pudicitia nulla venia. Nemo illic vitia ridet, nec corrumpere et corrumpi sæculum vocatur."

*fornication, . . . disobedient to parents, without natural affection.*

1. What was the *cause* of this demoralization?

We may imitate the Apostle's example, and appeal <sup>4</sup> to one of themselves, even a prophet, or poet, of their own nation, who testifies that the desecration of Marriage was the origin of the vices which dishonoured families, and overwhelmed the Nation with a flood;

"Fœcunda culpæ sæcula Nuptias  
Primùm inquinavère, et genus et domos:  
Hoc fonte derivata clades  
In Patriam Populumque fluxit <sup>5</sup>."

2. Here was the *source* of the evil—profanation of Marriage <sup>6</sup>. The dark rivers of woe flowed like a Styx or an Acheron from that deadly spring, and deluged the Capital of the world, and changed the Elysium of Italy into almost a valley of Hinnom.

A Roman historian, Tacitus <sup>7</sup>, writing about ninety years after the birth of Christ, says that among almost all the Nations, except those of Italy and Greece, Polygamy was habitual. In Greece and Italy, Polygamy was not usual; but Divorce was. Of the first six Roman Emperors, the first five divorced their wives; the fifth was murdered by one of his wives; the sixth murdered two of his wives and his own mother. Such were the Princes of this world. And the greatest of the Greek Philosophers did not admit Marriage into his ideal Republic; and it is unhappily too notorious how the two most celebrated sages of

<sup>4</sup> Titus i. 12. St. Paul's reference is to a verse of the Poet Epimenides.

<sup>5</sup> Horat. Carm. III. vi. 17.

<sup>6</sup> Similar avowals are made by Tacitus. Indeed his Annals and History present throughout a living comment on this truth.

<sup>7</sup> Tacit. German. cap. 18, 19, an interesting picture, particularly as intended to be a contrast to the description of Rome.



Rome—Cato and Cicero—dealt with their wives. Hence we see that Reason alone is wholly incompetent to protect even the elementary rudiments and primary principles of social duty and domestic happiness.

Those heathens did not know that Marriage had been instituted by God, and hallowed by His dear Son.

But they felt the effects of profaning it.

V. Then, at that critical time, when the world was almost drowned by a flood of impurity, the great Legislator Himself came down from heaven to cleanse the polluted waters. He came to purify the streams of social life and domestic intercourse, and to give them the clearness, salubrity, and sweetness of rivers of Paradise. You know how He performed that gracious work of household purification, by which society was revived. By His Incarnation. By marrying our Nature, and espousing to Himself a Church formed out of His own side, when He, the second Adam, was slumbering in death on the Cross, as Eve, the mother of all living, was formed from the side of Adam sleeping in Paradise<sup>8</sup>. *This is a great*

<sup>8</sup> S. Aug. in Joann. Tract. ix. "Dormit Adam ut fiat Eva; moritur Christus ut fiat Ecclesia. Dormienti Adæ fit Eva de latere, mortuo Christo lanceâ percutitur latus, ut profluant sacramenta, quibus formetur Ecclesia."

S. Chrysostom. tom. iii. p. 215, ed. Montfaucon. καθάπερ Εὐα ἀπὸ τῆς πλευρᾶς τοῦ Ἀδάμ γέγονεν, οὕτω καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐκ τῆς πλευρᾶς τοῦ Χριστοῦ. ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ὁ Χριστὸς εἰς τὸν σταυρὸν ἀιηνέχθη καὶ προσηλώθη καὶ ἀπέθανε, προσελθὼν εἰς τῶν στρατιωτῶν ἔνυξεν αὐτοῦ τὴν πλευρὰν καὶ ἐξῆλθεν αἷμα καὶ ὕδωρ, καὶ ἐξ ἐκείνου τοῦ αἵματος καὶ ὕδατος ἡ Ἐκκλησία ἅπανα συνέστηκε . . . . γεννώμεθα μὲν διὰ τοῦ ὕδατος τοῦ βαπτίσματος, τρεφόμεθα δὲ διὰ τοῦ αἵματος. ὁρᾷς πῶς ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ ἐσμὲν καὶ ἐκ τῶν ὀστέων αὐτοῦ; καὶ καθάπερ τοῦ Ἀδάμ καθεύδοντος ἡ γυνὴ κατεσκευάζετο, οὕτω τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἀποθανόντος ἡ Ἐκκλησία διεπλάττετο ἐκ τῆς πλευρᾶς αὐτοῦ. The Treatise of S. Chrysostom, εἰς Μύζιμον, καὶ περὶ τοῦ ποίας δεῖ ἄγεσθαι

*Mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.*

You know the wonderful change that was thus wrought in the moral aspect of the world. Our Nature was lifted from the dust and united to the Nature of God. God was *manifest in the flesh*, and *our life was hid with Christ in God*<sup>9</sup>. Womanhood was elevated by the hand of Christ from the degradation in which it lay; it was invested with fresh beauty and glory by Him who was born of the woman's seed. Woman was again made *to be a help meet for*

γυναικας (from which these passages are taken), presents an interesting specimen of the teaching of the Ancient Church concerning Marriage, and it is to be wished that some person, of sufficient learning and leisure, would reprint it, with some other ancient treatises on the same subject, in a collection, which might form an "Enchiridion Matrimoniale" for the Clergy and Laity, and would elevate the tone of public feeling, and improve the public morals, in this important respect.

To this we may add, HOOKER, Bk. v. Chap. xlvi. 7, Ed. Oxon. 1841, Vol. ii. p. 250 :—

"It is too cold an interpretation, whereby some men expound our being in Christ to import nothing else, but only that the selfsame nature which maketh us to be men, is in Him, and maketh Him man as we are. For what man in the world is there which hath not so far forth communion with Jesus Christ? It is not this that can sustain the weight of such sentences as speak of the mystery of our coherence with Jesus Christ. The Church is in Christ as Eve was in Adam. Yea, by grace we are every one of us in Christ and in His Church, as by nature we are in those our first parents. God made Eve of the rib of Adam. And His Church He frameth out of the very flesh, the very wounded and bleeding side of the Son of man. His body crucified and His blood shed for the life of the world, are the true elements of that heavenly being which maketh us such as Himself is of whom we come. For which cause the words of Adam may be fitly the words of Christ concerning His Church, '*flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bones,*' a true native extract out of mine own body. So that in Him even according to His manhood, we, according to our heavenly being, are as branches, in that root out of which they grow."

<sup>9</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 16. Col. iii. 3.

man, and joined to him by Christ, with solemn adjurations as well as with gracious benedictions,—*What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.* Marriage was restored to its primitive sanctity, and raised to new glory, and endued with new dignity, by being made a sacramental symbol of Christ's union with His Church, and a prophetic picture of His espousals in heaven.

Thus the conjugal estate was purified and adorned with heavenly beauty, and then, by a natural consequence, the sins which possessed society gradually disappeared wherever the Gospel of Christ was preached and duly received. Adultery, Fornication, Divorce, Desertion, Infanticide, fled like Evil Spirits of Darkness from the presence and Voice of Christ. He exorcised Society. He restored it to its right mind. The Marriage Covenant being renovated,—the other domestic relations,—the parental and filial, the brotherly and sisterly—which spring from Marriage as a common root, acquired new vigour and loveliness; they flourished in a second spring, and put forth healthful shoots, and blossomed with fresh flowers, and bore beautiful fruits of peace, holiness, and love, and changed earth into Eden.

VI. But alas! the Tempter,—the Enemy of our souls,—who envies our happiness, again stole into Paradise; he tempted us, as he did our first parents, by acting on our intellectual pride, and on our impatience of restraint, and by presenting to our appetites the pleasures and fascinations of sin. We know, from our own condition,—we know from the prophetic declarations of the holy Apostle,—that the Tempter's efforts are not, and will not be, in vain. “*In the last days perilous times shall come. . . . For men shall be lovers of their own selves; . . . disobedient to Parents, unholy . . . without natural affection.*”

Where, then, is the remedy?

1. Our Lord Himself has taught us. He purified society by restoring Matrimony to its first estate, by consecrating it anew, and by clothing it with fresh grace and glory. Thus He collected the scattered fragments of ruined and desolate homes, and reconstructed society. He built up the Nation, as He built up the Church—upon Himself. He built it on faith in His Incarnation; He built it on faith in His own indissoluble wedlock with our Common Humanity, sanctified by the Holy Ghost, and raised in Christ, our Head, from the grave, and exalted to the right hand of God, and reigning there. He built it on hope of heavenly glory in eternal union with Him. Here, my brethren, is our only basis of domestic love, of social peace, of national safety. Let this foundation be solidly laid, and our household charities will grow upon it in beautiful gradation and harmonious symmetry. On the sacred substructions of conjugal love, will rise the graceful ornaments and firm supports of mutual affection in children, in brothers and sisters, like some beautiful colonnade<sup>1</sup>, marshalled in regular array, or clustering together like richly-foliaged pillars in social groups, and consecrating the fabric of the Nation into a glorious Temple of God.

2. This foundation, my brethren, ought to have been strengthened by us. Alas! it has been greatly weakened; it has been undermined by ourselves. A few years since, Marriage was stripped of its sanctity by the hand of Law<sup>2</sup>. Thousands of Marriages now take place among us without any benediction from Him Who instituted Marriage in Paradise, and conse-

<sup>1</sup> *στῦλοι γὰρ οἰκῶν εἰςὶ παῖδες ἄρσενες.* Eurip. Iph. Taur. 57.

<sup>2</sup> 6 & 7 Will. IV. cap. 85. The Act in question has proved so distressing to the consciences of some who in an evil hour were induced to avail themselves of it, that a form was provided in the year

crated it on Calvary. Hence the Popular mind has been tempted to forget the words of the Holy Ghost, that *Marriage is a great Mystery*; and to regard it as little more than a mercantile transaction or secular bargain. Need we be surprised if some should be further led astray, and should regard all forms of Marriage as nugatory, and should fall into illicit connexions, and sin against Marriage without scruple or fear? Need we be surprised that the peace of families should be disturbed, and households dismembered, and that parents should be without natural affection, and that children should be disobedient to Parents, and that many should now be eager for greater facilities of Divorce?

3. These miseries, my brethren, what are they?

1841 to enable those who had been married at the Registrar's Office, to be remarried at Church\*. But in what a painful predicament are the Ministers of the Church thus placed! And in what inconsistency and perplexity has the Law involved itself. If the Marriage by the Registrar is valid, it cannot be iterated by the Church. Marriage cannot be *repeated* any more than Baptism can. When we marry two persons, we affirm that they have not been married before. "I pronounce that they be Man and Wife together, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." These solemn words become little better than an idle and profane mockery, if they over whom they are pronounced are Man and Wife already. Therefore the Law which provides for the use of the Marriage Office in the case supposed, does in fact declare that the Marriage celebrated according to Law in the Registrar's Office was *no* Marriage; and that therefore they who have been so united are not joined together in Matrimony, and that the people are in error if they imagine that the ceremony performed by the Registrar is any Marriage at all.

And now the Clergy are required to celebrate a Marriage on the authority of the Registrar's certificate.

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\* See Dr. Phillimore's edition of Burn's Ecel. Law, vol. ii. p. 433, sqq. The words of the affidavit are:—The parties "did contract and solemnize marriage in a certain registered building," and are "desirous of being *remarried* in the Parish Church."

The natural harvest of seed sown by our own hands—they are punishments inflicted on us by Almighty God for preferring the unhappy slavery of our own licentiousness to the perfect freedom of Obedience to His Law ; and for despising the Holy Ordinance instituted by Him at the beginning, for our peace in this world, and for our happiness in a blessed Immortality.

4. And here we are constrained to observe, that, from the causes now mentioned, our philanthropic designs are marred and blighted with evil.

One of the primary duties of the Christian household is moral and religious nurture and Education of children ; and self-sacrifice on the part of Parents for their own offspring is a fundamental law of society. If that law be set at defiance, the household will be disorganized ; but if it be duly obeyed, then reciprocal love and obedience on the part of Children to their Parents is the almost unfailing reward. But, from the degradation of Marriage, this law is almost forgotten, especially in our large cities. And then Christian Benevolence steps in, and erects Schools for week-day and Sunday instruction, it takes children to church, it almost adopts them as its own. If the Home were in a healthful state, then blessed would be the results of judicious and charitable co-operation with Parents, especially with poorer Parents, in the nurture of their children. But when the Home is in an unsound condition, then Public Charity must almost fail of its effect ; indeed, it may aggravate the disease. In the case supposed, the Parent rejoices to find himself relieved by public Benevolence from the burden (for such he thinks it) of his own offspring ; the children are reared without love for the Parent, who makes no sacrifice for them, and bestows little thought upon them. They grow up a homeless generation—a heartless race. The School supersedes the Home.

Public Societies overshadow and wither the private affections. The Parents become almost childless; the children are almost Orphans. Their intellects being sharpened, but their domestic feelings not being exercised, and household virtues not being practised, a People grows up among us impatient of restraint and ready for Revolution. And so, through the violation of the fundamental law of Christian Society, which is the Marriage Covenant, even our philanthropic efforts have a tendency to extend and perpetuate social disorganization.

5. In this sacred place we are concerned with this subject as a *religious* one. But we may perhaps be permitted to observe in passing, that other partial Improvements of a material kind have tended to deteriorate the household—particularly of the poor. Magnificent mansions have been built for the rich, new Streets and Terraces and Squares have been opened for them. But what has become of the Poor whose tenements have been swept away to make room for these splendid fabrics? What Dives has gained, Lazarus has lost. The Poor have been forced into more crowded and more squalid abodes, which afford no room for the decencies of life. Here, therefore, compensation is due from Wealth to Poverty. Here is a debt due to Conjugal Chastity and Virgin Modesty. Let dwellings be provided for the Poor, where the Christian Virtues and Graces may love to enter and abide<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> The following paragraphs may here be inserted from the Discourse mentioned above, p. 252:—

“Some other causes of the evil may be specified:—

“1. In the year 1834 and in the year 1844, Acts\* were passed for the Relief of the Poor. [“To

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\* 4 & 5 Will. IV. c. 76, and 7 & 8 Vict. c. 101.

6. Our religious divisions also have tended to increase the evil.

“To one result of these enactments we are constrained to advert here.

“When frail mortals fall into sin, one of their best hopes of recovery is from Solitude. Let them retire from the world into their secret chamber, and confess their sin to God, and weep over it, and pray for His Pardon and Grace. Let them sit with Mary Magdalene at the feet of Christ, and bathe them with penitential tears. And let them pour forth their griefs into the ear of some sympathetic friend, or spiritual guide. And if solitude is necessary for all under such circumstances, it is specially so for women. Surely, therefore, there is something very evil in a system which brings fallen women together into a crowded building with the proofs of their sin about them, and herds them together in the same public apartment as we sometimes see to be the case in our Union Workhouses. This is not the way to imitate Him who would not *break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax* (Matt. xii. 20. Isa. xliii. 3). This is not obedience to the Apostolic precept to restore the sinner *in a spirit of meekness* (Gal. vi. 1. 1 Thess. v. 14). This is not the mode to bring them to repentance and amendment of life. Rather, may we not thus constrain them to harden themselves, and to confirm one another in vice, and banish all sense of shame from their hearts? And by the publicity we give to their sin, and by the number of those who have sinned that we congregate together, may we not produce an impression on their minds and on that of others that the sin is an ordinary thing, that it is a venial thing, and to be regarded as a matter of course? And may we not familiarize the public mind, and our own minds, with it? And if other women who have *not* fallen into sin are brought into this unhappy company,—as is sometimes the case,—will they not be contaminated by the society into which they are thrown? Shall we not have prepared the way for their fall also? Is this Christian Philanthropy? Is this “relief of the Poor?” Will it not tend to propagate and perpetuate the sins which bring shame and misery upon us in this life—and in eternity\*?

“2. Another cause of the evil may be noticed, of a social and domestic kind. [“In

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\* On Jan. 1, 1851, in 606 Unions and Parishes, there were in the Workhouses 3703 Mothers of illegitimate Children, and on the 25th of March, 1850, there were 50,189 Children, of whom 12,694 were illegitimate, the Mothers of 8874 being also in the Workhouse.



These unhappy differences are intimately connected with erroneous and irreverent conceptions concerning

“ In Holy Writ, the history of the shame of Jacob’s daughter, and its unhappy consequences, is introduced by the words, *Dinah went out to see the daughters of the land* (Gen. xxxiv. 1). Her going out, and her curiosity, is indicated as the occasion of her fall; and a warning is thus suggested to parents and young women. The wise Son of Sirach says, that *a woman that is a gadder abroad will not cover her own shame; but as the sun when it ariseth so is the beauty of a good wife in the ordering of her house* (Ecclus. xxvi. 8. 16). And the Apostle of Christ censures those women who wander *about from house to house* (1 Tim. v. 13), and exhorts *young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home* (Titus ii. 5). *I will that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house* (1 Tim. v. 14). Home is Woman’s place, it owes its graces and comforts to her, and she derives her beauty from it. But we have cause to deplore that the ties have been weakened which attach women to their homes. Those very things which we regard as our national advantages have in some degree tended to produce this result. Our great Manufactures have superseded and silenced the domestic labours of the wheel and the loom. Our Schools, especially our Infant Schools, valuable as they often are, have done much to relieve Mothers of the care of tending, training, and teaching young children, and have thus loosed the bond of natural affection and duty which kept the Mother at home, and have left her free to go forth into the streets for idleness, or into the fields for work. The same may be said of elder sisters. And it is to be feared, that, being thus released from the restraint and duties of home, they may lose the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit (1 Pet. iii. 4), they may acquire a love of roaming, and contract habits of vagrancy, they may be thrown into evil company in the highways and in the fields, and be no longer what Christian mothers and Christian maidens ought to be; and the decencies of home may disappear, and its graceful simplicity and genial attractions melt away, and the rural garden be neglected and overgrown with weeds, and the cottage become comfortless, and the wife and mother may forfeit the love of her husband and children, and their offspring become undutiful and unruly, and the evil spread from house to house,—and all because we have not duly regarded the law of Nature and of Scripture, which prescribes that *Women should be keepers at home, should guide the house, being discreet and chaste, and ‘in all quietness, sobriety, and peace, be followers of holy and godly matrons.’* [“ The

Holy Matrimony. For what says the Holy Spirit of Marriage? *This is a great Mystery, I speak concerning Christ and the Church.* Christ, the Bridegroom, is One; and the Church, His Bride, is One<sup>4</sup>. There are not two Brides any more than two Bridegrooms.

“The remedy for the evil is partly of a secular kind, and partly spiritual. The secular would consist in greater attention to the internal arrangements and decent accommodation of cottages, and in the provision of in-door occupation for women where they are not already engaged in the domestic duties of their own stations. But this is a subject which belongs rather to our brethren of the laity, and may be referred to the pious and charitable consideration of our nobility, gentry, and other landowners, and of their wives and daughters,—and also of the wives and daughters of our Bishops and Clergy—who may render a noble service to the community, and may promote the glory of God, and the salvation of souls, by endeavouring to protect the virtue and cherish the holiness of those of their own sex, the young maidens and mothers in their own parishes, in humble life. Here indeed is a blessed mission for their Christian piety and love.

“3. Another point may be noticed here. Nature and Scripture teach that mothers ought to *nurse their own children*\*. But this duty is often neglected, especially in the upper classes of society. Our pious and learned Reformers exhort Preachers to remind women not to forego it. In the ‘*Reformatio Legum*,’ they say, ‘*Ad officium concionatorum arbitramur pertinere, matres ut cohortentur ne prolem in lucem editam inhumaniter destituant, et beneficium illis uberum suorum negent*†.’ What would our Reformers have said to the practice of those among the wealthy and noble, who sacrifice natural affection to the love of this world, and do not endeavour to nurse their children, but admit *unmarried* women into their households, and even give a preference to *unmarried* women, to be nurses of their Children; and, as it were, to be so far *mothers* in their stead! How can it be supposed that the Poor will regard fornication as a sin, when countenance and even encouragement is thus given it by the rich?”

<sup>4</sup> Cant. vi. 9.

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\* See the references and remarks in Occasional Sermons, No. XXIV. p. 165.

† *Reformatio Legum*, de Matrimonio, c. 13.

The Scripture doctrine of Marriage, properly understood, proclaims the Unity of the Church, but wilful Schism is spiritual Polygamy. Where religious divisions abound, sins against marriage will prevail also. The City of Corinth was notorious for the one and the other, and the Holy Spirit by the mouth of the Apostle reproves it for both. We must, therefore, bewail our religious discord, and labour and pray for religious unity, if we desire to have peace and love in our own homes.

VII. We have before us a great work of Religious Restoration. We have to repair the Christian Household. And we must begin with the foundation. As we have seen, it has been shaken, and we cannot rely on human reason or on human codes for its safety. We must not depend on human law, but obey the Word of God. We must live *above our laws*; we must live *up to the Gospel*. Let us then have the Gospel spread out before us, and build according to that divine plan. Let us carefully bear in mind what Marriage is, as there represented,—a Divine Institution, older than any Empire, more venerable than any Dynasty, more ancient than the Mountains, and Rivers, and Seas, formed before the Flood, coeval with the Creation, prophetic of Christ's Incarnation, *who came forth as a Bridegroom out of His chamber, rejoicing as a Giant to run His course*<sup>5</sup>, beautified by His First Miracle, typical of His union with the Church, *whom He loveth and cherisheth as His own Flesh*<sup>6</sup>, and of her endless fruition of His glory in heaven.

1. Therefore let us fear to desecrate it; let us regard it as a holy thing—as a great Mystery. If we have not entered the holy estate of Matrimony, let

<sup>5</sup> Ps. xix. 5.

<sup>6</sup> Eph. v. 29.

us pray for God's guidance and blessing upon us, that if we enter it we may enter it aright. If we marry, let us marry in the Lord<sup>7</sup>. Let us invite Christ to our Cana. No Marriage feast is worthy of the name at which He is not present. Without Him its mirth will end in mourning; with Him it is full of blessing. Let not the nuptial solemnity be performed in the cold cheerlessness of a half-empty Church,—as if it were a thing we were ashamed to shew,—but in the presence and with the blessing of revered parents, in the company of brothers and sisters, and loving friends and neighbours—let the holy vows of the Bridegroom and the Bride be wafted to heaven by the prayers of a full congregation, supplicating for Divine grace that they may be enabled to keep those vows, and invoking God's blessing upon them, so that Angels in heaven may look down with love on that holy assembly in the Church on earth, reflecting, as in a prophetic mirror, the future glory of the Church in heaven. And, if it may so be, let the vows of love and fidelity then plighted by the Bridegroom and the Bride be solemnly sealed and ratified by the blood of Christ in the Holy Eucharist<sup>8</sup>, received by them both clothed in the Marriage Garment of a lively Faith, that they may be one in Christ, and may dwell for ever in Him and He in them. Let them recollect that their bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost<sup>9</sup>, and will stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ; that they are destined for a blessed Resurrection and a glorious Immortality. Let their home be consecrated to Christ, on their first entrance to it, by united prayer

<sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 39.

<sup>8</sup> As enjoined by the Church in the rubric at the close of the Marriage Office.

<sup>9</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 19.

and praise to Him ; and let this holy and happy union of hearts and voices be continued by them, day by day, morning and evening, till they are severed by death. Then Christ will have come to their Cana ; He will have changed the earthly waters of their Vale of Tears into the new wine of heavenly joys ; they will retain Christ for ever with them, and they will be admitted hereafter to the Marriage Feast of the Lamb of heaven<sup>1</sup>.

VIII. This is a blessed work of Religious Restoration ; one in which we can all labour, in our several places and degrees : the Restoration of Holy Matrimony to its proper place in the national mind and life. Here we may be fellow-workers with Apostles, fellow-builders with Evangelists, and Prophets, and Angels, and with Christ Himself, and with God.

<sup>1</sup> The following beautiful picture of Christian Marriage in the primitive Church may be contemplated with profit as well as pleasure in our own days—Tertullian, Lib. ii. ad Uxor. cap. 5 :—

“Unde sufficiam ad enarrandam felicitatem ejus Matrimonii quod Ecclesia conciliat et confirmat oblatio, et obsignatum Angeli renunciant, Pater rato habet? Nam nec in terris filii sine consensu patrum rite et jure nubent. Quale jugum fidelium duorum unius spei, unius voti, unius disciplinæ, ejusdem servitutis! Ambo fratres, ambo conservi, nulla spiritus carnisve discretio. At quin vere duo in carne una. Ubi caro una, unus et spiritus. Simul orant, simul jejunia transigunt, alterutro ducentes, alterutro hortantes. In Ecclesia Dei pariter, in convivio Dei pariter. In angustiis, in refrigeriis, neuter alterum celat, neuter alterum vitat, neuter alteri gravis est. Liberè æger visitatur, indigens sustentatur, Eleemosynæ sine tormento, sacrificia sine scrupulo, quotidiana diligentia sine impedimento. Non furtiva signatio, non trepida gratulatio, non muta benedictio: sonant inter duos Psalmi et Hymni; et mutuo provocant quis melius Deo suo canet; talia Christus videns et audiens gaudet. His pacem suam mittit. Ubi duo, ibi et ipse; ubi et ipse, ibi et malus non est. . . . Non aliter fidelibus licet nubere: et si liceret non expediret.”

On the interpretation of this passage, see Bingham xxii. chap. iv.

*This is a great Mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.* If this Mystery can be reinstated where the hand of Christ has placed it, if it can be inaugurated again in its sacred shrine, then what holy influences would be diffused from that solemn Dedication! What praise and joy would thence flow forth in copious streams to the married and unmarried! What love of husbands to wives, and of wives to husbands! What blessings on their union and its fruits! What affections of Parents to Children, and reverence of Children to Parents! Then how rare would be the sins which now disturb the peace of Families, and are the disgrace of our streets, and destroy the health of body and soul, and bring down God's judgments on a People! What harmony would be diffused in Cities and Nations, and throughout the World! A Home would be an image of Paradise, and earth a seminary for heaven. Let us, then, labour in this work, and pray for God's blessing upon it. Then we shall be hallowing His Name, and advancing His Kingdom. Then we shall be called to the Marriage of the Lamb<sup>2</sup>, and follow Him whithersoever He goeth<sup>3</sup>, and shall reign with Him hereafter for ever and ever<sup>4</sup> in glory.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. xix. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xiv. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. xxii. 5.

## SERMON XLII.

HOPES OF RELIGIOUS RESTORATION IN ENGLAND<sup>1</sup>.

JOHN ii. 19.

*"Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up."*

THESE words, spoken by our Blessed Lord concerning His human body, to be destroyed by His enemies, and then raised up by His own Divine Power, comprehend in brief the History of that Human Nature which He assumed and made the Temple of the Holy Ghost; and also sum up the History of the Church, which is *His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all*<sup>2</sup>.

Two antagonist Powers are here presented to our view, one, that of Destruction—*Destroy this Temple*; the other, that of Restoration—*in three days I will raise it up*. And though the power of Destruction is allowed to prevail for a time, yet that of Restoration will be ultimately victorious; and then *captivity will be led captive*<sup>3</sup>, and destruction be destroyed. He who raised up His own body *must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet*<sup>4</sup>. *The last enemy that shall be destroyed*

<sup>1</sup> Preached at Westminster Abbey, Sunday, Aug. 20, 1854.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. i. 23. Col. i. 24.      <sup>3</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 18. Eph. iv. 8.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 25.

is death. *Death and the grave shall be cast into the lake of fire*<sup>5</sup>.

*Destroy this Temple.*—In this transitory world the cause of Truth seems often to be in jeopardy, and for a time to be obscured. Here Pilate judges, Barabbas is released, Christ is crucified. But *have faith in God*<sup>6</sup>. In these partial eclipses of the Truth is the appointed exercise of our trust, patience, hope, and love. *In three days I will raise it up.* I, who seem to be destroyed, will raise Myself,—says Christ,—and by My death and Resurrection will destroy the power of the Destroyer. *O Death, I will be thy plagues; O Grave, I will be thy destruction*<sup>7</sup>. And I will do this in a very short time, *in three days.* I will destroy the Destroyer in the hour of his Triumph. And thus, I will give to the world a pledge of Universal Resurrection; *Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead*<sup>8</sup>.

We have, then, an *anchor of our souls*, sure and stedfast<sup>9</sup>, amid the storms of this life, in the divine assurance of the full and final triumph of Truth, through the power of Him Who is *the Truth*<sup>1</sup>. God dashes pride from its loftiest height, and raises humility from its lowest depth. It is a universal law of Providence and Grace, that when Truth seems nearest to destruction then it is nearest to Victory; and when Error seems nearest to Victory then it is nearest to Destruction. Here we have divine encouragement in the work of Religious Restoration; being persuaded, that whatever may now be our trials, yet if we trust in Christ, and labour for Him, and through

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 26. Rev. xx. 14.

<sup>7</sup> Hos. xiii. 14.

<sup>9</sup> Heb. vi. 19.

<sup>6</sup> Mark xi. 22.

<sup>8</sup> Isa. xxvi. 19.

<sup>1</sup> John xiv. 16.



Him and in Him, and continue stedfast unto the end, we shall be *more than conquerors*<sup>2</sup>, and shall partake in His glorious Resurrection Who said, *Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up.*

I. Let us then consider this saying of our Lord as referable—

(1.) To our Human Nature united to the Divine by the Incarnation of Christ; and next,

(2.) As applicable to His Church incorporated with Him by Redemption.

1. The building of the glorious fabric which we inhabit—the Visible Universe,—was completed by the erection of a Temple, the central and crowning work of that beautiful Edifice. This Temple was our Nature. It was Man, formed from the dust, but created in the Divine Image, and animated by the breath of God; *God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul*<sup>3</sup>. Here, indeed, was a glorious Temple, in which the Deity was enshrined; a Temple reared in Paradise and built for Eternity. We were that Temple. But it was assailed by our Enemy and was marred by sin, and the sentence went forth against it, *Destroy this Temple*; and we were levelled to the dust, and we lay in ruins, like some magnificent Minster; the altar desecrated, the roof uncovered, the pavement overgrown with grass, and the nave and aisles laid bare to the shower and storm sweeping through the shattered walls, and the beautiful tracery of the once glorious windows now overgrown with ivy waving in the wind. We were that Temple—a Temple in ruins. But the temporary Triumph of the Tempter had been the occasion of a promise pre-announcing His future destruction, *the Seed of the Woman shall bruise the Serpent's head*<sup>4</sup>. And

<sup>2</sup> Rom. viii. 37.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. ii. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Gen. iii. 15.

according to that promise, the Son of God came down from heaven to perform a work of Religious Restoration. He came to make the *glory of our latter house to be greater than of the former*<sup>5</sup>. For He pitched His tent in our Nature<sup>6</sup>, and became our *Emmanuel*, God *manifest in the flesh*<sup>7</sup>.

Here was a wonderful work of Restoration. Nor was this all. Not only did He take our Nature, the nature of every man, by His Incarnation; but He has baptized us into Himself with His own blood, and by engrafting us in His body, the Church, He has made us *Temples of the Holy Ghost*<sup>8</sup>, and has built us up *to be living stones, in a spiritual house, a holy Priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God*<sup>9</sup>, through Jesus Christ Our Lord.

*Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up.*

Here, in the work of Redemption from slavery, and recovery from ruin, by the power and love of Christ, we see an Epitome of History, and a prophetic pledge of what is to come, even to the end of time.

With regard to the Past, the Sacred Volume abounds with evidence of this truth;

2. We see God's people in Egypt reduced to the brink of destruction. The Bush was burning with fire; but it was not consumed<sup>1</sup>. When it seemed about to be extinguished, then it blazed forth more gloriously, and destroyed its enemies. When the people were in a strait,—the Egyptians behind, and the sea before,—then they saw the salvation of God<sup>2</sup>. "I called *My Son* out of Egypt<sup>3</sup>," said God of His People; and to shew their nearness to Him,

<sup>5</sup> Hos. ii. 9.

<sup>6</sup> John i. 14.

<sup>7</sup> 1 Tim. iii. 16.

<sup>8</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 19.

<sup>9</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 5.

<sup>1</sup> Exod. iii. 2. Acts vii. 30.

<sup>2</sup> Exod. xiv. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Hos. xi. 1.

this saying was afterward applied by the Holy Spirit to Christ <sup>4</sup>. Even then they were regarded as already adopted to a Divine Sonship in Christ. The waters which saved them drowned their enemies : and Moses and the Children of Israel sang unto the Lord, saying, *I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the Sea* <sup>5</sup>.

3. Here, my brethren, is assurance to us in times of affliction. And for like encouragement let us join ourselves in imagination to the pilgrim train of God's ancient People issuing from the gates of Babylon, the City of their captivity, whose pride had been humbled in the hour of its exultation, when the sacred Vessels were on the royal table, and were profaned for unholy uses of sacrilegious revelry. Then the City fell ; and by its fall the People of God were delivered. Let us unite ourselves to them, bearing in their hands those sacred Vessels, now to be restored to the Service of God, and singing once more the Songs of Zion, with timbrels and dances of joy, *When the Lord turned the captivity of Zion, then were we like unto them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with joy. The Lord doth build up Jerusalem, and gather together the outcasts of Israel* <sup>6</sup>. And thence we receive a prophetic assurance and solemn warning, that the hour will come—even in the time of her greatest exultation, when the mystical Babylon will be most in peril ; then, even then, when she is entranced in a dream of security, and intoxicated with success ; when she is engaged in putting forth some new doctrine, or bowing down in some strange

<sup>4</sup> Matt. ii. 15.

<sup>5</sup> Exod. xv. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Ps. cxxvi. 1—3 ; cxlvii. 2.

idolatry of her own imaginations—then, even then, the great City will fall, and the people of God be delivered.

We are stimulated also by the example of the religious and courageous Nehemiah, resigning the honours of a Court to *suffer affliction with the people of God*; we are instigated by his zeal and perseverance surmounting the dangers that beset him from the treachery of friends and from the rancour of enemies, and *building the street and the city even in troublous times*<sup>7</sup>. We behold Ezra the Priest and Scribe standing on his pulpit of wood<sup>8</sup>, unrolling the Sacred Volume, and we listen to God's holy Word awakened from its slumber of seventy years; and we are roused from our own sleep of indolence and self-indulgence by the thrilling words of the Prophets Haggai and Malachi, and we are ashamed of our luxuries, and are excited to labour more zealously in the work of Religious Restoration, *Is it a time for you to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house of God to lie waste*<sup>9</sup>? We feel an inward shudder when we reflect that Almighty God is now looking down from heaven on our splendid mansions and sumptuous palaces, and that He sees our lofty towers aspiring to the skies, and that at the same time He beholds the misery and the vice of the thousands and tens of thousands of the poor and ignorant in those cities—and almost beneath the shadow of those mansions, palaces, and towers—who are left to perish by spiritual starvation. We hear the Divine rebuke, *Wherein have ye robbed Me? In tithes and offerings*<sup>1</sup>. We hear the Divine command to restore God's property to His worship, and to provide for His Service and Ministry, if we desire

<sup>7</sup> Dan. ix. 25. Neh. iv. 8; vi. 15.

<sup>9</sup> Hag. i. 4.

<sup>8</sup> Neh. viii. 4.

<sup>1</sup> Mal. iii. 8.

to have peace in our conscience, and to enjoy His favour as a Nation. *Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now therewith, if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing*<sup>2</sup>. Such recollections as these are fraught with instruction, and ought to be applied by us to ourselves, for the guidance of our practice, and for the promotion of God's glory.

4. Let us pass to another epoch in the same History.

The Temple, restored by Ezra, stood unmolested for about two hundred and fifty years. But then a King arose who persecuted the people of God—Antiochus Epiphanes of Syria. He profaned the Temple with heathen sacrifices, and set up a heathen altar—an abomination of desolation—in the courts of the Lord's house, in the place of the Altar of God. How low was then the condition of God's Ancient Church! Then, indeed, it might be said, *O God, the heathen are come into Thine inheritance; Thy holy temple have they defiled, and made Jerusalem a heap of stones. The dead bodies of Thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the air, and the flesh of Thy saints unto the beasts of the land*<sup>3</sup>. And then the Voice of Prophecy was dumb. No more did a Haggai or a Malachi arise to comfort the drooping spirits and excite the flagging energies of the people, with promises from heaven. The roll of prophecy was sealed—not to be opened for a century and a half. The sanctuary was laid waste; the enemies of God and His Church triumphed; *the Holy Place was overgrown with weeds and shrubs, and the gates were burnt with fire*<sup>4</sup>. Then, indeed, the word had been spoken,

<sup>2</sup> Mal. iii. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. lxxix. 1, 2.

<sup>4</sup> 1 Macc. iv. 38.

*Destroy this Temple.* True, and destroyed it might seem to be, never to rise again. But no. *In three days I will build it up. . . . Let God arise, and His enemies be scattered, and let them also which hate Him flee before Him*<sup>5</sup>. He did arise. He raised up a Judas Maccabæus and his brethren, and inspired them with courage from heaven<sup>6</sup>. They blew the trumpet, and unfurled the standard inscribed with the watchword of Victory, *Who among the Gods is like unto Thee, Jehovah?*<sup>7</sup> and they routed the enemy, and cleansed the Sanctuary, and rekindled the light of the holy candlestick, and the fire on the holy altar, and celebrated the Feast of Dedication *with songs, and harps, and cymbals; and the people fell upon their faces worshipping and praising God, Who had given them good success*<sup>8</sup>. And when in course of time He who was the Lord of the Temple came to visit His people, He blessed that work of Religious Restoration by honouring that Festival with His Presence; *It was at Jerusalem the feast of Dedication; and Jesus walked in the Temple in Solomon's porch*<sup>9</sup>.

5. In that Temple He spake the words, *Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will build it up.* He fulfilled this promise, as to His own human body; and He is ever fulfilling it, as to His mystical Body, the Church. In the History of the Christian Church, there never has been a time of Destruction which has not been speedily followed by a time of Restoration.

6. Consider the condition of the Church for the first three centuries after these words were spoken by our Lord. The Prince of darkness raged furiously

<sup>5</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 1.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Macc. iv. 32—54.

<sup>7</sup> Exod. xv. 11. Mi Camoka Baelim Jehovah? whence the Maccabees derive their name.

<sup>8</sup> 1 Macc. iv. 46—55.

<sup>9</sup> John x. 23.

against her in ten successive Persecutions, and the tenth Persecution was the fiercest of all; it was like the “*fluctus decumanus*<sup>1</sup>” of a stormy sea, and threatened to drown the bark of the Church. Churches were levelled to the dust: copies of Holy Scripture were cast into the flames, the blood of the Saints was *shed like water on every side*<sup>2</sup>. The sacred Vessel of the Church seemed to be foundering in the abyss; but then she emerged from the gulph, and rode gallantly on the crest of the wave, and sailed steadily on her course; for the hand of her Lord was on the helm. The age of trial was followed by an age of triumph. The Persecutors of the Church were suddenly checked in their course,—as Saul *breathing out slaughter*<sup>3</sup> was arrested in his mad journey to Damascus by the hand of Christ—in the fiercest career of their rage, and were changed into champions of the Gospel. Imperial Rome bowed her neck beneath the yoke; and the Cross of Christ, so lately the scandal of the world, was seen,—or believed to be seen—a symbol of Victory emblazoned in the sky,—it was graven on her coins, floated on the banners of her armies, and was set on the diadems of her Kings. Churches arose, unrivalled in grandeur, in the principal Cities of the Empire—at Tyre, Jerusalem, in Nicomedia, Constantinople<sup>4</sup>. Copies of the Scriptures were multiplied by imperial command, and were placed on Royal Thrones, in the Council Chambers of Christendom. And the Church,

<sup>1</sup> “*Altiùs insurgens decimæ ruit impetus undæ.*”

Ov. Met. xi. 530.

“*Qui venit hic fluctus, fluctus supereminet omnes;  
Posterior nono est, undecimoque prior.*”

Ovid. i. Trist. ii. 49.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. lxxix. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Acts ix. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Euseb. x. 3, de Vit. Constantini, c. 43. 45.

the Spouse of Christ, which had dwelt concealed from the sight, like a Christian Vestal, and almost immured in the subterranean crypts of the catacombs, came forth, arrayed like a Queen, *at the right hand of Christ*<sup>5</sup>, and sate on the Throne of the World.

*Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up.*

7. May we not also derive comfort and hope to ourselves, in the work of Religious Restoration, from these divine words as applied to the Church of Christ in our own Land?

*Destroy this Temple.* This sentence was almost executed upon us four centuries ago. What was our religious condition in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries? We speak not of material fabrics, but of the inward life of the Church. What boots it to walk in magnificent Minsters, to gaze on Altars blazing with jewels and gold, and on windows dyed with the richest hues of the rainbow, and to tread on pavements encrusted with marble and inlaid with precious stones, what do these things profit, if the soul of the Church is ready to die? What then is the value of the most splendid Cathedrals? They are like the painted cases, bespangled with blue and vermilion, which enshroud the mummies of Egypt. They are like gorgeous Cenotaphs. And such was then the state of the Church in our own land. Prayer—idly called Public Prayer—was entombed in the sepulchre of a dead language. The Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was maimed of its authentic features and divine proportions. That blessed Mystery was no longer presented to the eye of Faith as a clear well-spring of divine grace gushing forth freely in the wilderness of this world from the *spiritual rock which followeth us*<sup>6</sup>,

<sup>5</sup> Ps. xlv. 10.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. x. 4.



*and that Rock is Christ*,—to refresh, invigorate, and rejoice the weary and thirsty soul with living waters; but it had been changed into a thing dark and obscure, hidden in a gloomy cave, enveloped with mists; it was veiled with clouds of incense, and men gazed at it from afar in awe and dread, and crowds of worshippers bowed their heads before it, like reeds swept with the wind, in silent and distant amazement. The Evangelical streams of Divine Truth and Life, flowing in Holy Scripture, had been frozen up in a spiritual Winter. But still—*Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up . . .* The Church had been almost destroyed; but it was raised up at the Reformation. The Reformation in England was a work of Religious Restoration. It removed obstructions, and opened new windows, and let in a flood of religious light into the Church, in Prayers, Scriptures, and Sacraments, speaking plainly to all in our native tongue. It deepened the foundations of the Church in the Reason and Hearts of the People. But it did not build a new Church. It made no new Gospel, proclaimed no new Creed, erected no new Altar, created no new Order of Christian Ministers. But it cleansed and restored the old. Its agents were men, compassed with human infirmity, but the work was a work of God. May we learn, my brethren, to be more and more thankful to Him for it, and may we shew our thankfulness by holding fast its sacred principle, ever remembering that in the concerns of Christ's Church, Reform is only another word for Revolution, unless it be controlled, regulated, and animated by a wise and loving spirit of Religious Restoration.

II. And now what shall we say of the Future?

We are not prophets, but we must hearken to

the voice of Prophecy. Our Lord Himself forewarns us, in Holy Scripture, that the persecution endured by the Ancient Church of God in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, was a shadow of that persecution which yet awaits His Church in the latter days. Antiochus set up an abomination of desolation<sup>7</sup> in the Temple, and yet our Lord says to His disciples—“When ye shall see the abomination of Desolation<sup>8</sup>,” and He couples this with His own coming to Judgment,—intimating thereby, that in another form, that persecution is *still future*; and therefore Antiochus Epiphanes has ever been regarded by the Church as a type of Antichrist, persecuting the people of God in the last days. These are among the deep things of God. Let us meditate upon them with humble reverence. Let them prepare us for coming sorrows. We, my brethren, or our children after us, may see times of great spiritual distress. The Sanctuary may be laid waste; *the abomination of desolation* may be set up in the Holy Place—*Many will fall from the faith*<sup>9</sup>. Many have fallen. And when *the Son of Man cometh, shall He find the faith on earth*<sup>1</sup>? And we have no reason to look for any new revelation from God. In the days of Antiochus, the Book of the Law and the Prophets had been sealed up to the Ancient People of God. And now the Gospel of Christ has been sealed up to us. Therefore it is called the *everlasting Gospel*<sup>2</sup>. This Gospel, and no other, this Gospel without any additions, which was preached at the beginning to the Apostles,—this *Gospel of the Kingdom* (says our Lord) *shall be preached in all the world, for a witness to all Nations, and then shall the End come*<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> 1 Macc. i. 54; vi. 7.

<sup>9</sup> 2 Thess. ii. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. xiv. 6.

<sup>8</sup> Matt. xxiv. 15. Mark xiii. 14.

<sup>1</sup> Luke xviii. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxiv. 14.

We shall receive no more messages from heaven till we hear the Voice of the Archangel and the Trump of God<sup>4</sup>, summoning us all from our graves to stand before the Judgment-seat of Christ.

What, then? Shall we therefore faint or despond? Heaven forbid. We may see the times of Antiochus; but remember Judas Maccabæus and his brethren. Unfurl the standard of the Maccabees. *Who among the Gods is like thee, O Lord?* We have not to build a new Temple, but to repair the old, that which is founded on a Rock, the Rock of Ages, Jesus Christ; and though the powers of Hell will rage furiously against it, yet they shall not prevail<sup>5</sup>. *No weapon formed against it shall prosper*<sup>6</sup>. *Destroy this Temple*,—We must expect to be assailed by the Destroyer, whose wrath will wax fiercer as the end is nearer, *for he knows that his time is short*<sup>7</sup>. But, looking to Christ, we shall derive courage from danger, and faith from difficulty; and we shall celebrate hereafter with Him a Feast of Dedication, and shall walk with Him in the porches of the heavenly Jerusalem, in the everlasting Temple of the living God.

III. And here we may advert to our present circumstances, as suggesting ground of hope, even from our afflictions.

It has pleased Almighty God to visit us now with two of His sore Judgments—War and Pestilence.

He has declared in His Holy Word that He sends these Judgments on a Nation for its sins. *When a Land sinneth against Me, then will I stretch out Mine hand upon it*<sup>8</sup>. He stretches out His hand to send His Judgments; and among those Judgments He

<sup>4</sup> 1 Thess. iv. 16.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xvi. 18.

<sup>6</sup> Isa. liv. 17.

<sup>7</sup> Rev. xii. 12.

<sup>8</sup> Ezek. xiv, 13.

names two, which He has now sent to us of this Nation. *The Lord is now making bare His holy arm in the eyes of the Nations*<sup>9</sup>. His hand is now lifted up over us<sup>1</sup>. And let it not be said of us—*They will not see*. But when *His judgments are in the earth, let the inhabitants of our land learn righteousness*<sup>2</sup>.

Wherefore, my brethren, has He smitten us? But a few years have passed—only five—since the Plague was upon us. Why this repeated stroke? Why War and Pestilence sent together from heaven on a joint embassy of Woe? For what sins? For sins against God. “*Son of Man,*” He says, “when a Land *sinneth against Me, by trespassing grievously, then will I send My Judgments upon it.*” These Judgments are upon us as a Nation, for National sins against Him. And His Judgments will be upon us—perhaps with a three-fold or fourfold scourge,—unless we repent as a Nation, and amend our ways.

From the *repetition* of His Visitation—and after so short an interval—it is to be inferred that it has not produced the effect that He intended it should do. According to His own saying, *The people turneth not unto Him that smiteth them*<sup>3</sup>, and *in vain have I smitten your children, they received no correction*<sup>4</sup>.

Let us remember that on the eve of these present Judgments a remarkable avowal was made by the Nation of its own sin in the sight of God. Perhaps unconsciously, it proclaimed its guilt. It published its Religious Census, and there shewed that our Churches did not provide room for half of the people in the year 1800, and that now in the year 1853, they do not even *provide room for a third*. It revealed the alarming fact that Five Millions of its people—nearly a third of the whole—take no part in the public worship of God on

<sup>9</sup> Isa. lii. 10.

<sup>1</sup> Isa. xxvi. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Isa. xxvi. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Isa. ix. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Jer. ii. 30; v. 3. Neh. ix. 29.

the Lord's Day<sup>5</sup>. They live without Him in the world. It published to the world the announcement that, in a time of long peace, and boundless wealth, and unexampled prosperity—which have been vouchsafed to this Nation by the mercy and bounty of Almighty God, Who is the only Author of all good,—Millions of immortal souls have been left, and are still left, to perish without any pastoral superintendence for ministering to them the means of grace and salvation; without comfort in this world, and without hopes of a better.

Here is the source of our misery; here is the cause of our punishment.

And where are our hopes?

If we were left to ourselves we should have none. Peace and Prosperity have done little for us in spiritual respects. They seem to have made us proud and forgetful of God. But He in His mercy intervenes to save us. He would awaken us from our dream of deadly security. He sends us chastisements in love, to move us to Repentance and Amendment, that so we may be rescued from destruction. The noblest works of Religious Zeal have been achieved by Nations in times of trial. The Church of Christ has been nursed among storms; as the Ancient Father<sup>6</sup> said, "when we are near to the sword, then we are near to God; when we are in the midst of wild beasts, then we are in the hand of God." *In the time of trouble I will seek the Lord: Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, and teachest him in thy law*<sup>7</sup>. *When He slew them*

<sup>5</sup> There is reason to believe that the Census Returns of 1851 are not free from error as to the relative numbers of the Church of England, and of the various Dissenting congregations. But there is no cause to suspect their accuracy as to the relative proportions of those who attend *some* place of Worship, and of those who do *not* attend *any*.

<sup>6</sup> S. Ignatius ad Smyrn. 4.

<sup>7</sup> Ps. xciv. 12.

*they sought Him, and enquired after God*<sup>8</sup>. This is our duty *as individuals*,—to spend and be spent, in mind, body, and estate, for Christ and His Church. But this is not enough. We must endeavour to heal our divisions, and to *unite as a Nation* in public works of Religious Restoration. We must incite one another, we must implore our Rulers and all in authority, to endeavour to appease the Divine Wrath, and to avert the Divine Judgments by national sin-offerings to God. We may point to the example of King David and his elders, clothed in sackcloth, and falling on their faces before the Lord, when the Angel of the Pestilence stood with his sword drawn over Jerusalem<sup>9</sup>, and not content with external signs of sorrow, nor willing to offer *to the Lord of that which cost him nothing*. And so the plague was stayed<sup>1</sup>. The thunders of God's judgments are rolling over our heads. *His lightnings are shining on the ground; His clouds pour out water; the air thunders, and his arrows fly abroad*<sup>2</sup>. And the storm will rage against us in some form or other, till either (which heaven forbid!) we are given over by Him to a reprobate mind, and sink helplessly and hopelessly in a gulph of national sin and woe, or else (which may He grant!) we are constrained as a Nation to fall down on our knees, and confess our sins, and to make vows of Repentance, not only with our lips but in our lives, and to do works of Religious Restoration; to perform Acts of public Homage to Christ, as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, by adoring Him as Supreme, not only in Churches and households, but in the streets and marts of the City—not only in Schools and Colleges, but in Courts of Justice, and in the Senate; in Fleets and in

<sup>8</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 34.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Sam. xxiv. 24, 25.

<sup>9</sup> 1 Chron. xxi. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. lxxvii. 16, 17.

Armies ; and by aiding in an adequate provision of holy places for His worship, and in the restitution and enlargement of maintenance for His ministry, and in bringing those vast multitudes who now sit *in the darkness and shadow of death*, particularly in our populous cities, to the light and liberty of the Gospel, and to the hope of a blessed Immortality.

Then we may have good hope, that the din of arms may cease and the blessings of peace be restored ; then we may feel a joyful assurance that Almighty God will say to the Angel of Pestilence—<sup>3</sup>*Stay now thine hand ; it is enough* <sup>4</sup>.

Thus, my brethren, His sore Judgments may now have for us an Apostolic mission, and may perform an Evangelical office ; War and Pestilence may become Angels of Mercy, and may rescue our beloved country, and restore her to the favour of God. They may prepare us to stand with joy before the Judgment Seat of Christ, and to enter His Kingdom of glory, and to praise Him for ever and ever, and to enjoy everlasting felicity.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Sam. xxiv. 16.

<sup>4</sup> The Author has no wish to enter into controversy with any who imagine that this work may be left to *private efforts alone*. He has already expressed his own sentiments on that subject (above, pp. 23. 28), and he is persuaded that the more carefully the evidence of the case is examined, the more clearly it will appear that it is illusory to imagine that private efforts alone will suffice to rescue our country, and especially its populous towns, from the moral and religious misery in which they now lie. And,—with reverence be it said,—he feels convinced also from the declarations of Holy Writ, that Almighty God will not be satisfied with private efforts ; but that He requires public acknowledgments from the Nation, not in words merely but in deeds, that He is the Arbiter of her destinies, and that her strength and peace, and prosperity and glory, depend on National Acts for the maintenance and promotion of His Honour and Service ; and that National Judgments are sent for National Sins, and cannot be prevented, averted, or removed, but by National Repentance and National Amendment.

IV. Finally; *Destroy this temple—and in three days I will build it up . . . This spake He of the Temple of His body.* And what He spake was done—He raised Himself from the grave. He left His grave-clothes in the tomb, and He now says, *I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen: and have the keys of hell and of death*<sup>5</sup>. And what He said of Himself, He said also of us, who are incorporated in Him; *This spake He, therefore of the temple of our body; For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive*<sup>6</sup>. Then will be the *restitution of all things*<sup>7</sup>. Then will arrive a glorious day of Religious Restoration. Then will be *the redemption of our bodies*<sup>8</sup>; and the trumpet will sound of that everlasting Jubilee, for *which all creation groaneth, the full manifestation of the Sons of God*<sup>9</sup>. Then great will be our joy, if we have lived in an abiding sense of God's infinite Majesty and Power, and of the insignificance of all earthly grandeur in comparison with His Eternal Dominion; and of the absolute dependence of all earthly kingdoms upon Him,—for to *Him the Nations are but as a drop of a bucket, and as the small dust of the balance; and He taketh up the Isles as a very little thing*<sup>1</sup>; and *the Lord is in His Holy Temple, let all the Earth keep silence before Him*<sup>2</sup>. Then, glorious will be the crown that we shall receive from the hand of our Judge, if we have not fainted in this world, but have laboured *in evil report and good report*<sup>3</sup>, for Christ and His Church. Then, however feeble our present powers, however small our present success, and however great our present suffering, yet if we have trusted in Him, and have adored Him as King of Nations, and have never

<sup>5</sup> Rev. i. 18.<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 20. 23.<sup>7</sup> Acts iii. 21.<sup>8</sup> Rom. viii. 23.<sup>9</sup> Rom. viii. 19.<sup>1</sup> Isa. xl. 15.<sup>2</sup> Hab. ii. 20.<sup>3</sup> 2 Cor. vi. 8.



ceased to assert His Universal Supremacy, and have lived and acted in a firm persuasion that the day will soon arrive, when *all things will be put under His feet*<sup>4</sup>; and, if in days of desertion we have felt that He cannot forsake us,—if in days of destruction we have had a firmer faith in future Restoration—if the strifes and turmoils of this world have made us keep our eye more steadily fixed on the glory that shall be revealed; and if the din and tumults of Earth have produced in us inward peace, and have quickened the sense of the ear of Faith to hear the angelic song which will soon be sung in heaven, “*The Kingdom of this World is become the Kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ*”<sup>5</sup>—then this bodily tenement and mortal Temple of ours will be raised in immortal glory; it will be invested with angelic health and celestial strength and unfading beauty, *and be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue even all things unto Himself*<sup>6</sup>. Amen.

<sup>4</sup> Ps. viii. 6. 1 Cor. xv. 27. Eph. i. 22.

<sup>5</sup> Rev. xi. 15.

<sup>6</sup> Phil. iii. 21.

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